COMING EVENTS

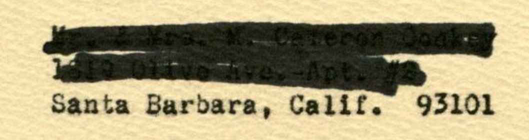
Be sure to save April 17th for the Historical Society's celebration of Santa Barbara's birthday.

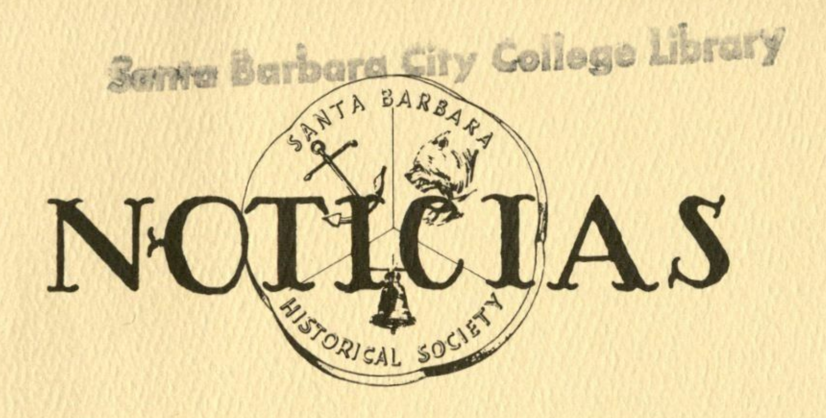
The May Tour will be either to Cachuma and Zaca Lake or to the Ojai-Santa Paula area. Date and details will be announced later.

We would certainly like comments or suggestions as to interesting tours in the future. Dr. J. Walter Collinge, our Tour Chairman, may be contacted at 965-2561.

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE
SANTA BARBARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
136 EAST DE LA GUERRA STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93101

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NOTICIAS



Ellwood Cooper's ranch home — S.B. Historical Society

Vol. XXIX, No. 1 Spring, 1983



Orchid arrangements, 1956 Orchid Show

Dos Pueblos Orchid Co.

*A LETTER OF ELLWOOD COOPER**
AUGUST 1, 1870

We left New York on the evening of 14th of June via New Jersey & Penna-Central R.R.; had a good locality in one of Pullman's Silver Palace cars; were not aware that these cars run on the route between New York and Chicago. After passing New Brunswick we turned in and passed Philadelphia sound in sleep. About 25 miles before we reached Altoona we were notified that we would have 25 minutes for breakfast at that place. Our first night and first meal initiated us in the routine of our voyage.

We rolled on over the Alleghenys, passing through Pittsburgh without much stop; arrived at Alliance, Ohio, where we had 30 minutes for dinner. Took our supper at Crestline, turned in for our second night, and the next morning about 5:30 were notified to dress ourselves for Chicago, where we arrived at 6 a.m., the 16th, having been 35 hours from New York.

At the depot we met a good friend (Mr. Heile) who conducted us to the Tremont House where we made change of clothing, got our breakfasts and then took a long walk on the Lake side, our friend being with us. At 10 a.m. we were at the depot of the Rock Island R.R. and in our Silver Palace car again, our friend having secured good quarters for us; bidding him goodbye, we sped on . . .

Arrived at the Missouri River at 9 a.m. the 17th. Soon we were at Cozzens Hotel, Omaha, where we met our first cousin Jeremiah Cooper. We kept very close during the day as it was very calm.

On the morning of 18th we took carriage and drove about 20 miles in the country to see our Brother Morris. The country was open the whole distance, no fences; the laws of Nebraska are such that farming can be done without, and hence great saving to poor settlers; stock at large are liable for any damage they do. The country round Omaha is even more beautiful than that after leaving Davenport, Iowa, and can be farmed with less than one-half the labor required in the best sections of the Middle States. The soil is richer, the climate better than any portion east of the Missouri. It is here where every poor man should emigrate, as it requires less means to begin. Near Omaha the value of the land is about $100 per acre. From 5 to 25 miles distant the value is $10 to $40, depending on nearness to town, as also nearness to the railroad.

On the 19th at 11 a.m. we took our places in the Pullman car again on the Union Pacific R.R. and continued our journey; very soon we were in the valley of the Platte River and for about 500 miles the appearance was much the same: the country beautiful and all susceptible of cultivation. Before the railroad was commenced, there was no population, and even one year ago when I went over this route, where no appearance of cultivation existed, now settlers have commenced taking homes and very soon must all be under cultivation, at least near the railroad, and will present more appearance of industrious husbandry than the section through which the Camden & Amboy R.R. of New Jersey passes . . .

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*Ellwood Cooper had met Colonel W.W. Hollister about a year previous to his settling here and purchased some 2000 acres of the Dos Pueblos Rancho, where he set out 400 acres in English walnuts, almonds, olives, deciduous fruits and citrus, and raised grain. He introduced the eucalyptus to this area. They lived in Santa Barbara a short time before moving to the ranch.

[At Cheyenne] we took on board our train General Greer and staff with Band of Music, and some soldiers. They were going to Fort Halleck. This circumstance made the impression that we were in wartime, the shining swords, shoulder straps, etc. The band played every time the train stopped and made it quite lively. This war party went as far with us as Ogden.

After leaving Cheyenne the country presented a barren appearance, and not worth much so far as I could judge. The voyage in passing through the Black Hills and Rocky Mountains was very interesting, snow capped mountains nearly all the time in view. After getting through the first portion of the Rocky Mountains we descended gradually until we reached Utah . . .

Ogden is quite a lively place; it is here that the Salt Lake branch R.R. terminates and the trains to and from bringing and taking passengers. Our train ran along the Lake for some distance. It was dark before we reached Promontory. We turned in for the night . . .

Soon after leaving Ogden, we struck the Humboldt River. The valley of this river is desolate beyond description; what a cheerless voyage is must have been for the Emigrants. I cannot imagine what value this valley can ever have, and yet a few places where the accommodations for travelers had been located, we found little gardens with all kinds of vegetables growing well, and were told that only irrigation was required. We turned in on the night of the 22nd for the last time, as we were on the following morning to enter the Golden State of California, and to arrive in the Golden Empire of the West in the evening.

When we awoke, we were descending the Sierra Nevadas. For 25 miles or more the railroad is covered with snow sheds, and the travel is very uninteresting as nothing is to be seen. After getting through the sheds, an open car was attached to the train, for the benefit of passengers who desired to witness the grandeur of the view in descending the balance. This was no novelty to us as we had gone over on horseback, as well as by stage, more romantic as well as wilder places two years previously when visiting this coast.

We breakfasted on the 23rd at Colfax, arrived in Sacramento at 11 a.m. Here we telegraphed our friend, Albert Dibblee at San Francisco that we would arrive in the evening. We arrived at Stockton about 1 p.m. Afterwards we approached the valley of Almeida [Alameda?] County; the balance of the voyage after our entrance in this valley was most interesting; the bustle and thrift of a well cultivated district, and all the most improved methods of farming and harvesting going on. On place we saw a portable steam engine, threshing wheat, only three persons in attendance: one engineer, one on the wagon throwing the sheaves into the thresher, and the third taking away the straw, and changing the sacks as they were filled.

We arrived in San Francisco on the 23rd at 6 p.m. making the running time from New York in one hour less than seven days. I would here remark that the voyage could easily be made in six days, and shall soon expect to hear of the time being reduced. Mrs. Cooper and the children stood the voyage remarkably well, and without much fatigue; for myself, I was sick

the whole route. We met on the wharf our friend Albert Dibblee, who extended both hands to welcome us. He had secured excellent rooms at the Lick House for us; we were very comfortable, and will say that the accommodations, attendances (sic), table, etc., etc. were very much better than at the Everett in New York, where we had last stopped, and the price more reasonable. I think that hotel life in San Francisco is now quite equal to the Empire City, if not superior, and far ahead of either Philadelphia or Boston.

San Francisco will rival New York sooner than most people are willing to believe. The shops for purchasing trinkets are far ahead of any Eastern city; what a splendid place for the purchase of Christmas and New Years presents, as well as birthday presents; the variety at moderate prices is inexhaustible. I could see a great change since my former visit. We remained in the City six days. Sailed on the 29th for Santa Barbara, arriving here on the 30th at 1:30 p.m., time, 28 hours.

Here we are, the Italy of America, the Paradise of the Western World. The climate perfection of this Globe! Our first nights and days were spent rather uncomfortably, and owing to the want of hotels and proper houses to live in, we were forced to buy a home in the town, which we did before we were here one week. We bought a lot 225 feet square, which is just one-fourth of a town lot. Our lot had a little wooden house on it 25 by 26, one story; for the whole we paid $1,000, and which was considered very cheap. We moved in immediately, and since have been happy as clams.

Our house has no frame, simply boards nailed on sills, and to a sill at the roof upon which the rafters rest. It has a good roof. The boards answer for outside wall, inside wall, and support of building, plenty of air holes; in fact, it is the best ventilated house in town. We are fencing in our lot, building stable, and an addition to the house, as also digging a well. The whole when finished will cost about $2,000, household furniture, $500 more, making a total of $2,500. We intend to keep a horse and carriage, as I will have to go to the ranch 12 miles out, and for the family to ride to the beach and around town.

I find that here untrammelled with the follies of society, with all the liberty we want, we live more simply. All our things arrived in good condition. Our piano we have set up since one week, and the children taking lessons. The College is adjoining our lot; one of the teachers is giving our children lessons. The school is spoken of highly. Next term commences this week. We will soon have the opportunity of knowing how our children progress.

The first 14 days after we moved in our little house, we took our meals at the St. Charles Hotel, a French restaurant; for all we paid $15 per week, and as we were equal to four persons, made only $4 per week each for board, which is cheaper than anywhere East. We commenced to eat in our own house since one week. It will be some time before I know the expense of living in this way. We pay our girl $30 per month. She agrees to do the cooking, washing and ironing. I think we can easily live at $2 per day; with our girl hire, [this] will make about $100 per month. We get the best cuts of meat at 10 cents per pound; mutton, six cents; Irish potatoes, one cent per

pound. These are very cheap prices.

CLIMATE We are now here 31 days; during all this time there has been no change worth the mention from the average temperature as given here, say evening and morning, 68 to 72—lowest point during the night: 60 to 65; highest point at midday, 75 to 80. This 3 p.m. as I write the thermometer stands at 79½. I feel as if I did not wish either one degree cooler or warmer. I have heard of 82 degrees since here. Colonel W.W. Hollister, my country neighbor, has been here 16 months and tells me that during all this time there has been but 3½ days that he could not work out in the open field in his shirt sleeves. It is continual summer, and yet never hot. I found it most agreeable during any part of the day to sit out on our gallery and so it is every day. After I have spent one year here, I will report again. There are more fine days here in any one year than there are in **five years** anywhere East. Go where you will East, it is either **too** cold or **too** warm, **too** wet or **too** dry. We have every day a fine sea breeze; people wear the same clothing the year round. So much for climate, which is the best in the world.

The appearance of the country is perfectly lovely, the prospect grand and sublime, mountains on one side, the great ocean on the other. The building spots on our ranch cannot be surpassed anywhere; I can have wild ravine views, rugged mountains, the ocean, and look over all the country between me and the town 12 miles distance, the West view of equal importance.

When we describe the beauty of the country, and the delicious climate, we have said about all that can be said in favor of the place. The people, however, who have come here are rather above the average, and most have means. There are very few squatters. In fact, that class cannot get on here. This is no place for **poor people**, and I would discourage all such from coming. Those who have some means, say about $10,000, so as to purchase a little place, and all the implements necessary to work it, and sufficient means to live upon for a couple of years, could build themselves nice homes, and live as princes.

Adjoining me [in the country] are 700 acres for sale. The owner asks $25 per acre, probably could obtain $15, not more. Two or three good farms could be made of it. The highest price we paid was $22.50. About five miles out there were 30 acres of very choice land sold at $80 per acre. I have the opinion that there is good land between us and the town that can be had at $20 to $40 per acre. It is most remarkable that while there has been no rain since March, four months ago, corn, potatoes, beans, beets, all kinds of vines are growing well. I never saw a finer appearance of corn, much of it being from seven to eight feet high. All the young trees are also thrifty.

When we look over the country where no cultivation is going on and see the brown, burnt appearance, we would not believe anything would grow, yet side by side exists the most luxurious vegetation. It is incomprehensible, and not at all surprising that people who have lived here for 50 years (Spanish) have always believed nothing would grow without irrigation, and hence never made the trial. Not only Spaniards, but the early Eastern settlers were of the same opinion. Many of them remained in California 15 or 20 years without trying.

This place in reality is only two years old, and hence one has to live a pioneer life without those advantages which are so necessary to a high state of civilization. It will, however, be only a few years, as eventually we must be in advance of any country section on the continent. Most of the people who are coming here have means, and when the coast railroad is built to San Francisco all the wealth for homes will be expended in this county. Land that was sold a few years ago for $2.50 per acre will be worth a thousand, and who knows how much more. Every rich man who appreciates a delicious climate must bring up here.

The Native population with a few exceptions of pure Spanish are a mixture of Spanish and Indian, and very much resemble the colored population of the West Indies. The male population are good help for any services that require them on horseback, but for anything else they are good-for-nothing; they will not do any manual labor, and must die out. It is remarkable how peaceable they are and how little apparent vice exists among them. I have seen no drunkenness, and as old as the place is, I am told there is no stealing. People do not lock their houses; valuable goods can remain out for months undisturbed. Civilization, however, will soon bring all the wickedness that the human family is given. The higher the state of Civilization, the greater and more rapid the progress of every evil.

The programme of the people who have located here is to grow fruits of a semitropical nature: olives, figs, lemons, oranges, walnuts, almonds, etc., etc., as well as all the different kinds that grow in a temperate climate. It has been tested in a small way that the soil has a value for fruit growing of about $3,000 per acre. I know a gentleman who is living 10 miles south, whose small strawberry patch of 100 square feet gives him an income of $25 per week, and enough to support his family. Strawberries require irrigation, and when properly attended to, have fruit all the year.

I intend to plough about 500 acres the coming winter and put in wheat, barley and corn, potatoes, etc., so as to prepare the grounds for trees. In my nursery I will have some 10,000 trees of the various kinds. Next year I hope to succeed better and have 30 to 40,000 trees. My neighbor, Colonel W.W. Hollister, is planting some kinds of vegetables every month, so as to test whether he can have them fresh for all seasons of the year. When I know more, I will write again.

I must close the lengthy letter; had no idea of spinning out so much when I commenced. I have so much to do, and much that will be rough, so that I will be deprived of the luxury of writing letters.

I am very truly yours,
Ellwood Cooper.

P.S. —— We have two weekly newspapers--five churches, one college, telegraph is building and will be completed this fall. Railroad being surveyed——steamboat communications every six days; stage every day. We get the San Francisco newspapers regularly two days old. — —E.

REMINISCENCES OF WINFIELD B. METCALF

Edited by Stella Haverland Rouse

These reminiscences of Winfield B. Metcalf were given to the Historical Society by Mrs. Frances Miller Honover of San Francisco, a relative. They present a vivid account of "pioneer life" in Santa Barbara. The place where the small boy lived for a short time in Montecito was being developed by his grandfather, Bradbury T. Dinsmore, a Maine Yankee, who planted the first orange grove of any size in the valley on what later became the San Ysidro Ranch.

In 1872 Mr. Dinsmore wrote to the Press that he had been fairly successful in getting rid of brush and rocks on his land, for it had been in a primitive state when he moved there four or five years previously. By 1872 he had about 900 orange trees, 250 lemons, 50 limes, and deciduous fruit, almonds and olives, as well as some grain products on his 60 acres. His was the first attempt to cultivate strawberries, which produced a marketable crop mid-January to September. He also experimented with a Chinese variety of a dwarf banana from Hawaii.

Winfield B. Metcalf was born September 3, 1862, in Hydesville, Humboldt County, California, six months after his mother and father, Danford Metcalf, arrived from Maine via the Isthmus of Panama early in 1862. His father engaged in stock raising, then in the mercantile business. In 1868 the family moved to Santa Barbara where Winfield's father was similarly occupied. His mother was a member of the Dinsmore family, and Winfield was a cousin of Thomas Dinsmore, County supervisor for eighteen years.

Mr. Metcalf was educated in the old Santa Barbara College and public schools. In 1880 he was employed by the First National Bank of Santa Barbara. Later he became cashier of the Santa Barbara Savings Bank, later known as the Commercial Bank. He was cashier of the Commercial Bank for seventeen years. In 1897 he assisted in organizing the Central Bank, where he worked until 1921. Then he resigned to become vice-president of the Santa Barbara branch of the Pacific Southwest Trust and Savings Bank, which had taken over the old Commercial Bank. That institution later became the Security-First National Bank of Los Angeles, and the old Central Bank which Mr. Metcalf helped organize became the Bank of America.

In his reminiscences he refers rather questioningly to Frank Frost, who was a merchant and also County treasurer, yet Mr. Metcalf held two financial positions, one governmental, one commercial for a number of years, for he was elected County treasurer in 1892, but continued his banking activities until 1924, when governmental responsibilities increased so greatly that he resigned his banking position to concentrate on duties as County treasurer.

He was considered by his business acquaintances a very efficient man, and one who was so devoted to his work that he seldom took a vacation. His Morning Press obituary July 31, 1933, says, "He would spend long hours at his desk, working on the books of the County, and called for no extra help other than that offered by his wife, during the noon hour. He easily won re-election to his position because of the efficient and economical manner in which he operated his office." A heart attack caused his death July 29, 1933.

He was affiliated with the Masons, Knights Templar, Knights of Pythias, Elks and Native Sons of the Golden West. His wife was active in the Daughters of the American Revolution and promoted the marking of several historic spots in Santa Barbara. A son, Stanley, a civil engineer of Illinois and his wife survived him. His home was at 1640 Grand Avenue.

Sometime in the summer of 1868 the store and house where we lived [in Hydesville] was sold preparatory to our departure for Santa Barbara, where our Grandfather Dinsmore had preceded us, and we moved up to the farmhouse where we lived with Aunt Frank, Uncle Tom and our grandmother. Uncle Gus with his family had gone to Santa Barbara. The move to Santa Barbara [was] being made on account of the health of Uncle Gus who had to go to a milder climate. I don't seem to remember anything of the cold fogs and winds that the family have said so much about prevailing through the summer . . .

A few weeks before we started [for Santa Barbara], "Esquire" Hendes and Will Snell started overland with a bunch of horses for Santa Barbara, taking George [Winfield's brother] with them. Father had bought George a little saddle in San Francisco for the trip, as there was no wagon road until they reached a point about a hundred miles from Hydesville. At that point a wagon was purchased, but before that place was reached, they rode on horseback and took their baggage on pack saddles. George rode a mare that we called "Old Mag" (the direct maternal ancestor of "Bird" and "Pover"). George was only nine years old and he and his saddle looked quite small but very important to the younger members of the family. They were three weeks on the road and got to Santa Barbara before we did.

I don't know the date that we left Humboldt except that it was after Election Day in November. We went to Eureka on the stage, excepting Father who drove in his Concord buggy that he shipped down by steamer. I don't know what became of the horse that he drove to Eureka. Probably [it] was taken back to Hydesville and later brought down to Santa Barbara . . .

When Father was in San Francisco, when we were on our way to Santa Barbara, he was talking with a wholesale merchant from whom he had purchased goods for the Humboldt store, and in the course of their conversation, Father told him he was moving to Santa Barbara, and asked him if he knew anything about the place. The reply was "Not much, except that a year or two ago somebody was in here with a subscription paper to get supplies to keep the Santa Barbara people from starving." This evidently was at the time of the great drouth of 1864, that ruined so many stock raisers. . .

We stopped at the Russ House in San Francisco. There had recently been a severe earthquake there, and the chambermaid at the hotel told Mother and Aunt Frank of the amusing things that happened at the hotel when the quake came in the early morning.

We came down to Santa Barbara on the side-wheel steamer *Orizaba*, arriving here after dark. We anchored out a little distance from the short wharf that was here then, and were rowed to the steps of the wharf by the sailors in the ship's boats. The weather evidently was good, as I remember

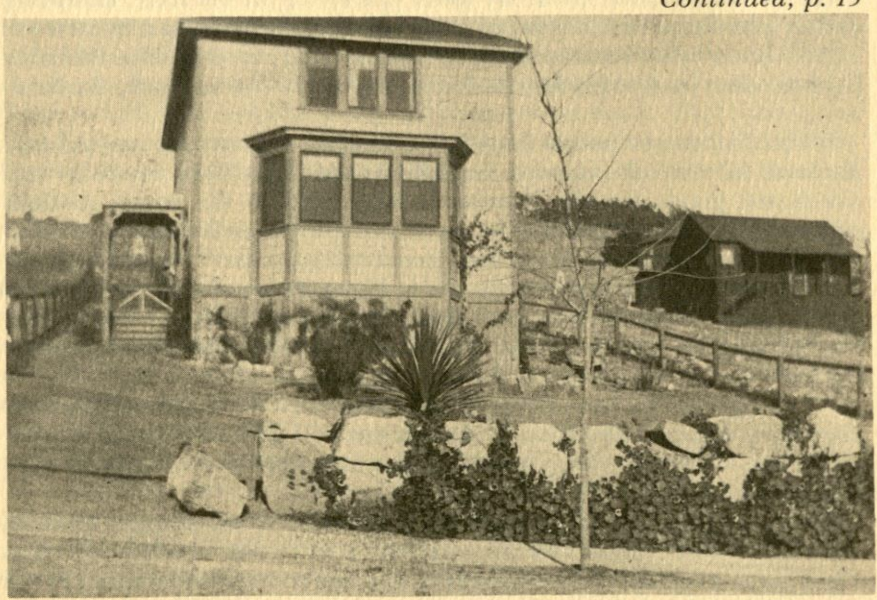
nothing except the total darkness. We were met at the wharf by Mr. F.W. Frost, a merchant of the town, and what seems rather odd to me now is the fact that he was also County treasurer. He had a spring wagon at the foot of the wharf, and took us to a hotel called the American House, located on the east side of State Street about the middle of the seven hundred block, opposite the present Parma block. The name of the proprietor was James Shaw.

The next morning the first thing I remember noticing was the maids that were hanging out their washing in the rear of the hotel, it being the first time I had seen what we called the "Spanish." Then looking out on State Street there were some more women who lived there who were heating their irons for ironing clothes, before an open fire. They also looked very strange to me. Of course I had seen Indians in Humboldt and there was also one Negro there, and once there had been a Chinese boy who worked a short time at Hart's Hotel in Hydesville . . .

The next important event in Santa Barbara was the advent of George who had come in from Montecito to see us, or rather to see Mother, for whom he was homesick. He said he got along fine on the trip [to Santa Barbara], except that the first night out they slept on the hay in a barn without a roof and when the rain commenced to fall, he got homesick. He had ridden in from Montecito with our grandfather, who had driven in with the farm wagon to take out the trunks, and incidentally the children, consisting of Willie Hosmer and myself.

The road to our grandfather's place (the San Ysidro) was very long, but rather interesting, even to a six-year-old like myself, everything being so different from Humboldt. The first object of interest on the way was the

Continued, p. 13



W.B. Metcalf's home, built 1886 S.B. Historical Society

NOTICIAS INDEX
Volumes XXVII and XXVIII
1981-1982

Compiled by Margaret Neeld Coons

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AUTHORS

"Salt Pond," now called the "Bird Refuge." Grandfather told us that the natives gathered the salt that had encrusted on the surface to use in their homes. Along the road we met several two-wheeled oxcarts loaded with wood that they were bringing into town. The Native boys rode on top of the load and drove the oxen with lines fastened to the tips of their horns as reins, disdaining the "Gringo" "Gee and Haw" method. The yokes were also fastened or rather lashed to their horns with rawhide thongs in the Spanish way. The carts had large wooden wheels put on wooden axles, and while they applied lots of tallow, they screeched excruciatingly along the road. Before coming to the Salt Pond we passed the home of Mr. N.W. Winton on Indio Muerto Street, where we saw for the first time a "Pampas Grass" plant in his front yard. [It was] the progenitor of what afterwards became quite an industry in Santa Barbara. Many thousands of the Pampas plumes were afterwards raised and cured here and shipped to the Eastern states and Europe.

I think from Mr. Winton's place there was no house along the road until we came to the home of William Benn or "Old Man Benn" as he was called, who lived where what is now known as Mt. St. George, or was known by that name afterwards. We went down to the hill and along Pepper Lane, then across Montecito diagonally up the hill to the home of our grandfather, where is now the San Ysidro Hotel and cottages. Across the creek lived Uncle Gus (A.I. Dinsmore) and his family.

Grandfather Dinsmore (Bradbury T. Dinsmore) and Grandmother were living in an adobe of one room, two doors and a asphaltum floor on their place. They cut out a place in the east wall and put in a window, and with a bed and a stove Grandfather and Grandmother were quite comfortable. The rest of us: Father, Mother, George and I, (John was so small he did not count) Uncle Tom (Thomas Hosmer), Aunt Frank and her boy, Willie, besides Uncle Gus with his wife, and three children were all crowded into the few rooms of the house of Uncle Gus. How it was done I can't imagine now. I think Cousin Maria Baxter and Will Snell were there too, with possibly others I have forgotten.

There must have been early rains, because there was lots of water in the creek where the youngsters had a glorious time. While playing there the first day, I fell on my back in a pool, and when I went up to the house I was informed that I would have to go to bed, with my clothes drying as our goods had not been brought out. That was indeed a serious situation for me, and you can easily imagine how the assembled family consoled us by telling me how long I would have to be in retirement. To my great relief, Mother gathered up garments belonging to some of the other children and I was turned loose most fantastically garbed and afforded much amusement for the older people.

We moved into a house belonging to Grandfather on a ten-acre lot on Milpas Street, where some years later the First Ward School was built, and where George taught in 1883 and some years later Anne Hosmer taught for quite a while [at the corner of Montecito and Milpas Streets]. I remember that we children were not pleased with the change, as the crowd of children and all of the family [at San Ysidro] made lots of excitement for

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After we moved into town, everybody turned in and built a small five-room house for the grandparents. It was built of rough pine lumber, as I remember it. Cloth and paper inside. Outside, the spaces between the boards were covered with battens; a porch was built around the front and west side, but I don't think the outside had any paint other than on the doors and windows and their frames that were made of surfaced lumber.

The old adobe kitchen, as everyone remembers, was left detached with only a roof over the space between the buildings. It was anything but pleasant during a wind or rainstorm, going back and forth between the kitchen and dining room. What seems stranger yet is the fact that this passageway was never enclosed while the family lived there, which was until 1883. After the house was made habitable, Aunt Frank and Uncle Tom [Hosmer] with Willie moved over also, and in April Anne was born there.

We lived in the small rough board house in town until August. While we lived there, it seemed to us there was a constant stream of two-wheeled oxcarts passing back and forth past the place between the town and Sycamore Canyon. They were piled high with Chaparral poles, which were taken to town to be cut up for firewood... The oxen which pulled the carts were light, and the drivers would race them up the lane when returning with the empty carts, with the wheels screeching in a heart-rending manner.

There were but three neighbor families that I remember: Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and their children; Kittie (Mrs. Harmon Bell) and Louis, who afterward died in Sonora, Mexico, lived a short way towards Sycamore Canyon, where Mrs. Bell has a house now. Our only conveyance was a Concord buggy that Father used with his black mare, "Sally," so when we all went anywhere, it was in Mr. Wilson's farm wagon with the hard boards well covered with hay. Whether it was to Church and Sunday School, Mr.

Wilson would stop and take in those that could not go in the buggy. We made one memorable trip to the Hot Springs, that was then a well known resort. The bath house that I patronized was made of brush. There were others that were built more luxuriously of rough boards on end. I presume that the spaces between were battened and the knot holes covered, but I did not observe such details then.

On Milpas Street lived the family of A.W. Russell. (Mrs. Gammill, one of the daughters, still lives there, and Mrs. Nixon, another daughter, in the immediate neighborhood.) I have many pleasant recollections of the oldest boy, George, who farmed the vacant ground where we lived, with a pair of white mustangs named Billy and Sally. This team were runaways and afforded much excitement for us. Once they came to a stop with the plow they were dragging on our woodpile. Another time, Father's mare, Sally was attacked by bees where she was picketed out, and they feared she would get killed, but Will Snell happened to be there and crawled out and cut the rope. She got away safely.

Some time in the Spring, father and Uncle Gus went back to Humboldt to clean up some business matters and returned with a lot of horses. They and their progeny were used by the family as long as we used horses. They were road horses of endurance, but rather tempermental . . . They came over the San Marcos Pass Toll Road as they came home. I think they were one of the first, if not the first parties, to use the unfinished Toll Road . . .

While Father was in the North, my brother, Llewellyn, was born on the second of June, 1869. The Winter of 1868-69 was rather wet. I remember that on Christmas day Father and his niece, Martha Baxter, attended the dedication of the Episcopal Church on Gutierrez Street. It was a rainy day and the Estero had no bridge, so that the water came clear up to the bed of the high Concord buggy.

A little later, in March, George and I watched a schooner drift ashore in a big storm, one of the few instances of a severe Southeaster coming so late. The wreck lay there in the sand, an object of great interest for both of us for several years that it was left there.

Prior to 1864 a company of San Francisco people built what was called a "Matanza" a little way east of where Miramar is now located. Their business was that of killing the cattle that could be bought very cheaply at that time for their hides and tallow. There were a number of large iron kettles in which we were told they could put as many as 80 carcasses of the cattle after they had taken off their hides, and there cooked the meat for the tallow. The Matanza was dismantled in 1871 or 1872. Uncle Tom helped get the machinery out. The land was sold shortly afterward. I did not go to school that year, for some reason that I have forgotten, [if] I ever knew. Mother gave me my first lessons at home. George went to the public school, I think, for a short time until Professor Harmon opened a private school in a little building at the corner of Chapala and Canon Perdido Streets. Early in August, 1869, we moved to Santa Rosa . . .

While we were living in Santa Rosa Father made a short trip to Santa Barbara and while there with Mr. Short and Uncle Gus, bought some land at Las Cruces and a band of sheep. He must also have bought a couple of

blocks of land on the west side of town, on which there was a small house, because when we came down to Santa Barbara from Santa Rosa in August, we moved into the house within a week or ten days after we got here. We came down by steamer, reaching here about four o-clock in the afternoon, and went right out to Montecito. That evening or the next day we went out to the east pasture lot with Uncle Gus to see where he had been treed by a grizzly bear only a few days before. Uncle Gus had lived in the hills in Humboldt and had seen many bear, so he was not much excited. He cocked both barrels of his gun, intending to give him one charge of shot and then when the bear came for him, to shoot him in the mouth with his second barrel. Contrary to his expectations, both barrels were discharged, and so much bird shot irritated the bear, who immediately charged the dog as the culprit.

The dog, of course, ran to Uncle Gus for protection and arrived at his side with the bear close up before he had time to re-load his gun. Uncle Gus showed us where he stood, and where the bear was when he first saw him, and then how, when the bear came around the tree where he was, he shoved the gun into his open jaws and got up in the tree out of the way, waiting there while the bear chewed the gun barrel for a while and then finally went up the small gulch into the mountains. For years we showed the younger children this tree and told them the story, as Uncle Gus only lived a few years after that.

A HALF-CENTURY OF SANTA BARBARA ORCHIDS

By Alice Rypins*

Love of nature, social prestige, horticultural innovation and lucky coincidence have made orchid growing in the Santa Barbara area a real success story in the past half-century. Unlikely as it seems, local enthusiasm for growing orchids began in the depths of the Great Depression. Several venturesome Santa Barbara flower lovers planted cymbidium bulbs under their oak trees. When tall spikes put forth their sprays of colorful blossoms, they were an immediate sensation.

It started as a hobby of the well-to-do. The first to become interested in the delicate-appearing but actually hardy blossoms were wealthy residents. Among those who had the leisure and the money to buy cymbidium bulbs and experiment with hybridization were Mrs. William Dickinson, Mrs. Edward Carpentier and Mrs. Harry B. Ireland. Mrs. Ireland was a tireless hybridizer, and is credited with innovating the popular miniature novelty cymbidium.

Orchid raising has become not only a multi-million dollar income producer for Santa Barbara County (7 million dollars in 1982), but the hobby of hundreds of enthusiastic amateurs. Exotic orchid varieties are nurtured under lath trellises, in room-size greenhouses and even outdoors, thanks to our mild south coast climate.

Santa Barbara's annual spring orchid show has played a leading role in this success story. Nurseryman Bert Kallman helped organize the first show, held in the city's Recreation Center in March, 1946. The only orchids were cymbidiums.

This emphasis on one variety gave many unversed flower lovers the impression that the words cymbidium and orchid were synonymous, but that is not the case. There are thousands of orchid species, several of which, including cattleyas, paphiopedilums and cyprepediums, soon were permitted in the show, which quickly outgrew Recreation Center and moved to the National Guard Armory on Canon Perdido Street.

Though it attracted exhibitors from England, Australia and Hawaii, it was not until 1953 that the show was known officially as the Santa Barbara International Orchid Show.

Orchid fever began to spread. E.O. Orpet*, a local horticulturist who had a nursery on State Street near Ontare Road, encouraged another orchid enthusiast, Eliot Rogers, to import cymbidiums from England. One of his imports, Sussex Dawn, became the parent of several grand champions of the show. Early Santa Barbara orchid history would not be complete without the names of Eliot Haberlitz, a commercial grower, and Lovell Swisher, who started his orchid growing in Hollywood, both of whom were Santa Barbara show judges for many years.

Actually, Pasadena, Los Angeles and Hollywood were early orchid-

*Mr. and Mrs. Martin Rypins, passing through Santa Barbara in 1959, immediately chose it for their retirement home. Since then both have been active in the community. Alice Rypins' involvement has included publicity for various civic organizations.

*Mr. Orpet was Park Superintendent in the 1920s. Orpet Park on the Riviera, which he developed, was named for him.

growing centers. During the past half-century, urban growth and air pollution have driven the growers from that area, while orchid activity here has burgeoned. In recent years, tulip-renowned Holland has become the world's biggest orchid grower in terms of acreage, but Santa Barbara is recognized as the top for hybridizing.

One of those who saw the commercial potential of the hardy, long-lasting cymbidium back in the 1930s was Bob Peterson. He quit his job with Weber's Bakery and he and his brother started a Montecito wholesale orchid selling firm which he still operates. He found orchids a satisfying career and we are indebted to him for many details of this account.

The late Signal Oil tycoon Samuel B. Mosher was bitten by the orchid bug after L. Sherman Adams of Massachusetts put on a prestigious affair in Hollywood Park to show off Adams' hybrids. Mosher hired a noted Los Angeles horticulturist, Kermit Hernlund and sent him buying abroad. England at that time was the acknowledged top grower and hybridizer of quality orchids. It seems a lucky coincidence that World War II shortages of help, fuel and income in England made bargains available to Mosher's emissary. Hernlund bought only the best as he made the rounds of England's orchid "who's who:" Rothschild's, H.G. Alexander's and McBean's.

Meanwhile, on his Dos Pueblos Ranch, Mosher built acres of climate-controlled greenhouses, attuned to the requirements of the most delicate orchid species. He researched culture and hybridizing. Last but not least, he provided a tropical indoor garden showroom where customers sipped and supped at lavish buffets. He made orchid selling a social event. Peterson attributes the extraordinary strides made in cymbidium culture to Mosher's infusion of money. Though Dos Pueblos Ranch boasted oil wells, cattle and citrus orchards, the name Dos Pueblos became synonymous with quality orchids. Today Dos Pueblos still sells orchids, but has diversified.

Local growers ship around the world, furnishing blooms in foreign growers' "off-seasons." Some of their best customers are in England and on the continent. Plants and cut flowers are sent to Australia and New Zealand; mostly plants to South Africa. Cut flowers are inserted into water-filled tubes, packed in large boxes, cooled down in a special temperature-controlled room before beginning a refrigerated truck (for nearby customers) or airborne trip. As many as 100,000 blossoms can be packed a day. Plants receive similar tender treatment.

In 1948 the Santa Barbara Orchid Show featured an orchid auction as an added attraction. Auctions were held in conjunction with the show for several years. A canny bidder could pick up a likely bloomer for as low as $15, though most went for $100 or more. Eventually preoccupation with the auction by some growers hurt the show, and it was discontinued.

As commercial firms prospered, hobbyists formed local chapters of the Cymbidium Society of America in 1946, and later of the American Orchid Society. Both furnish judges and awards, as well as entries in the show.

By the mid-50s the orchid was "in"—a status symbol pursued mostly by the very rich. Santa Barbara's mild climate inspired local aficionados to

add more varieties to their plantings, and price was no object. But, as often happens when a commodity gains popularity, unscrupulous entrepreneurs emerged. Unwary buyers were outraged as plants for which they had paid top prices failed to produce.

In December, 1953, the Santa Barbara Orchid Exchange, a non-profit cooperative, was formed. Mosher made available packing sheds, refrigeration, office space and supplies, for a centralized marketing operation. Members' plants and cut flowers were strictly graded and fairly priced. Soon the Exchange had not only eliminated double-dealing vendors, but had gained Santa Barbara's growers a reputation for top quality. However, as individual nurseries grew stronger and competitive marketing took over, the Exchange faded.

Orchid fever reached its zenith in the 1958 show. It was an unparalleled extravaganza. It began with a gala premiere sponsored by the Assistance League. Its features included ribbon-cutting by the state's lieutenant governor, a 45-man chorus, an ice show on the Armory stage, and the crowning of an Orchid Queen. Outside the Armory a huge tent housed a Trade Fair crowded with educational exhibits, model greenhouses, power tools and rare books.

In 1960 the show moved to Earl Warren Showgrounds' gold-domed flower-shaped Exhibit Building. By then, myriad varieties in rainbow colors graced the show: in theme gardens, in groups, or as specimen plants, running the gamut—from huge ruffled cattleyas, phalaenopsis (the moth orchid), paphiopedilums, oncidiums, dendrobium lycastes, epidendrum and tiny botanicals. Corsages, arrangements and educational displays were included.

Since then various attractions have been offered, but always the central purpose has been to display orchids in all their beauty and diversity. Fashion shows were popular for several years. Santa Barbara Beautiful was a co-sponsor in the mid-70s. Although that organization is no longer involved, a policy it inaugurated—contributing any proceeds above expenses to city street planting—has been continued. Since 1973 the show has opened with a wine tasting benefit for the Arthritis Foundation.

The first Cymbidium show in 1946 had only three judges. The 1983 Santa Barbara International Orchid Show listed 100. The first important prize was a gold medal presented by the Cymbidium Society in 1949. Today there are name trophies, gold, silver and bronze medals, ribbons and special awards, as well as a special cash prize to an amateur, presented in 30 different categories.

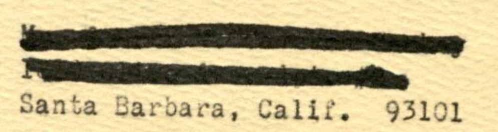
The 1983 annual Santa Barbara International Orchid Show (the 38th) was scheduled for Earl Warren Showgrounds March 11, 12 and 13. At the same time the Cymbidium Society of America held its Eighth Annual Congress at the Miramar.

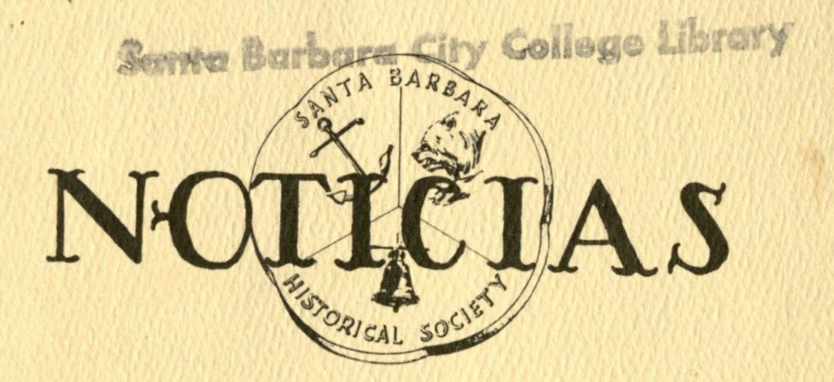
Obviously, a beautiful flower has found a suitable home in a beautiful place. Orchids have come a long way in Santa Barbara since those few cymbidium bulbs were set out under the oak trees in the early 30s.

COMING EVENTS

Be sure to save Sunday, July 24th, for the Santa Barbara Historical Society's PRE-FIESTA BARBECUE at 5 p.m. It will be held in the patio of the Covarrubias Adobe, 715 Santa Barbara Street. No host cocktails. Dinner at 6 p.m. Traditional music, food and hospitality.

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
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136 EAST DE LA GUERRA STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93101





Stewart Edward White

Santa Barbara Historical Society

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Betty White

Santa Barbara Historical Society

STEWART EDWARD WHITE'S SANTA BARBARA

By Stella Haverland Rouse

In the decade before the turn of the twentieth century, a number of affluent easterners and middle westerners were lured to California by its equable climate, its beauty and its economic potentialities. Those families frequently came to stay at the Arlington Hotel for several months, then went back to their eastern homes and businesses, and returned here again for an enjoyable stay. After alternating home bases, many of them eventually moved here permanently.

Among those people were the T. Stewart Whites of Grand Rapids, Michigan, who first came here in 1884. Mr. White, a lumberman, invested in several projects here after a few years, and the family acquired a home on the northwest corner of Santa Barbara and Islay Streets. Mr. White died in 1915, having made this his winter home for the preceding ten years, but Mrs. White maintained her residence here for many years after that.

The five boys in the family, Stewart Edward, Gilbert, Harwood, Roderick and Ruggee, spent parts of their childhood in Santa Barbara, and three of them resided here as adults. Gilbert became famous as an artist, Roderick as a violinist and Stewart Edward as an author.

Stewart Edward White was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 12, 1873. Although most biographical sketches state that he was educated in Grand Rapids public schools, and received his college education at the University of Michigan, the novelist spent enough time here as a boy to become very familiar with Santa Barbara's way of life and to reminisce about it at length in *Speaking for Myself* and *Dog Days*.

The Santa Barbara in which he lived as a teenager, from about the age of eleven years, and his young manhood after about 1904, when he and his wife lived for a while at the Arlington Hotel, was also the home of many other Santa Barbara aficionados who adopted the town as their own. There



"Room 45, Arlington Hotel, 1902" Mrs. H. White

were prominent business and professional men who backed many civic projects, as he did. An artists' colony developed here shortly after the turn of the century, and literary and musical notables lent a cultured tone to the community. The population rose from 5,865 in 1890 to 11,659 in 1910.

WHITE'S LITERARY BEGINNINGS

After having been involved in several types of businesses, including gold mining, lumbering and publishing, Stewart Edward White wrote *The Claim Jumpers* (1900). *The Blazed Trail*, an exciting tale of lumbering which was published in 1902, established his position as a novelist, and was a "best seller" for thirty years. Many other books about Canada, the western plains and Arizona followed.

He also wrote several novels based on early California ranch life and history, including *Gold*, *The Gray Dawn* and *The Rose Dawn*. The latter, describing the transition of large ranches to smaller Yankee farms, involves a ranch near a town patterned after Santa Barbara places, and involves a Chinese servant in the plot.

As White's stories gained in popularity, he made several hunting trips to Africa, bringing back trophies which he displayed in his home, and many ideas for thrilling magazine tales. One of the illustrators of periodical adventures was William Henry Dethief Koerner.

THE AUTHOR'S HOME

Tourists passing the author's home at the northeast corner of Santa Barbara and Los Olivos Streets were told by their guides that this was the residence of the famous writer. The house still stands behind a high wall erected a number of years ago when the Monastery of Poor Clares was



The Author's Childhood Home — Santa Barbara Historical Society



"Country Club Golf Links" Mrs. H. White

established on East Los Olivos Street. In the author's day it was in "open country," and quail darted about in the area. Cattle sometimes were driven on nearby streets.

There were no neighbors across from his home in the 2200 block of Santa Barbara Street, and when in 1908 the boys from Thacher School came to town to participate in the parade honoring the Atlantic Fleet, they camped opposite the White residence. The thirty-six boys with their six teachers and three Chinese "house boys" brought twenty-nine saddle horses to ride in the parade, for which White was the marshal. White with two other noted writers, visited the camp one night to spin yarns for the young men.

While he and Mrs. White lived here, he devoted his time to writing. In the summer they frequently visited their mountain cabin at Lake Tahoe. After 1910 he went on several hunting expeditions to Africa. Betty, his wife, was a devoted companion on many California camping trips, but did not enjoy hunting in Africa.

About 1911 she collected bulbs, plants and seeds in Africa for Dr. Francesco Franceschi, who was propogating many exotic plants for local use. With a rifle she shot down seed pods from the African fern pine, or Podocarpus, which Dr. A. Boyd Doremus planted in Alameda Plaza.

After Betty's death in 1939 Stewart Edward White wrote several metaphysical books. He died in 1946.

HIS SANTA BARBARA FRIENDS

The author had a wide range of acquaintances here. Artist Fernand Lungren illustrated some of his books. Rob Wagner, who painted his portrait, was a pal in travel and writing escapades. Joel Fithian was interested in Sandyland, which White named, and where he enjoyed surfing and relaxing.

He may have thought that faraway places were more romantic than his

"hometown," but only two semi-autobiographical books published later in his life are collections of periodical reminiscences about his Santa Barbara days. However, he left a wonderful collection of photographs of this area. The Gledhill library of the Santa Barbara Historical Society has a fine collection of photographs taken by him, and Mrs. Harwood White of Montecito also loaned some photographs used for this revelation of Santa Barbara as the novelist and naturalist knew it.

A combination of White's recollections, writings of contemporary Santa Barbarans, and pictures through the eyes of the novelist present Santa Barbara as it was in the early part of this century for readers of *Noticias*.



"Mission Canyon Road" Mrs. H. White

ROB WAGNER'S FRIENDSHIP

When author-artist Rob Wagner visited Santa Barbara in 1928, he reminisced for the Morning Press regarding his association with White here in the early 1900s: "At that time, a bright-eyed blonde boy by the name of Tommy Storke, was publishing a snappy afternoon paper called the Independent, for which Stewart Edward White and I were surrepticiously contributing a column of small-town impertinence . . ."

According to him, one of their journalistic triumphs was "kidding the Mission fathers into giving up wearing bowler hats with their smocks and sandals . . .

"At the time I sing of, the Old Arlington bar was the social meeting place of the young blades of the town, while Monsieur A. Goux purveyed to the vinous thirsts of the villagers . . .

"From five to six every night, the sounds of horses' hoofs could be heard all over town, and if one stood out in front, he could see riderless horses running hither and thither.



Autos at White Home S.B. Historical Society

"This seeming phenomenon was caused by the horse etiquet of the day. Tourist parties returning to their homes or hotels after a day at the beaches or in the mountains would never ride the horses to their stables, but upon dismounting, they would throw the reins over the horse's neck, and let nature take its course, which inevitably for the horse, led to his own stable, howsoever remote.

"It was not long, however, before the new horseless carriage fad swept the country, and in a few years even Stewart White fell for the gasoline narcotic [1906] and became horseless.

"His first purchase was a Maxwell-Two and then one notable day the village was stirred by the adventurous news that the great game hunter and his daring friend were to drive to Los Angeles. Equipping ourselves with leather coats and huge goggles, we bid our families good-bye, and amid cheers and tears we set out in a cloud of dust and unpleasant odors . . ."

White retold the adventure in one of his books, too, for their mishaps were so many that the first night they reached only Ventura, and another day found them in Los Angeles.

"Other recollections of those days," Wagner continued, "are of C. C. Park and his large equestrian family which rode in from Montecito every day, like a bunch of Cossacks in a feature film . . . and a polo team composed wholly of Boesekes . . ."

CAMERON ROGERS' RECOLLECTION

Cameron Rogers, writing about Santa Barbara's Arlington Hotel Jockey Club and the desire to "escape from the humdrum here" in a 1955 News-Press story, recounted that in the early 1900s "Stewart Edward White, determined to prove that a man didn't have to be in his green youth to play baseball, formed a team which, until he broke his leg sliding into second base, played at the old Leadbetter polo field on the Mesa. Nobody went around saying that he was a grown man and ought to have known better . . . Santa Barbara was like that. And like that it still is. If a man or a group of men, without doing mischief to the commonweal indulge a dream, it has the community's blessing . . ."

AN ISLAND ADVENTURE

Residents of Santa Barbara contemporary with White probably remembered the dogs which he owned at different times, and which followed him on many horseback jaunts around the city, or in later years sometimes rode in the auto to Serena. They were of many breeds, and the author recalls their characteristics in fond detail in *Dog Days*. There were Irish setters, Llewellyn setters, airedales, Irish terriers, Scotties, West Highlands, and some of mixed breeds, like a combination of terrier and pit bull. They were photographed on the Serena beach, following horseback riders into the foothills and with White in photograph studio studies.

One of the more exciting canine adventures White recalled in *Field and Stream* was a trip to Santa Rosa Island with a local man, Wesley Thompson. In addition to the customary gear for boar hunting, White took along two of his dogs, an airedale and a mixture of pit bull and terrier. Since the animals were not experienced hunters, some of his friends questioned the wisdom of this decision, but his trust was vindicated by their instinctive cooperative effort of each seizing a boar's ear to overcome it. White's picture album preserves the incident for posterity.

WHITE'S KNOWLEDGE OF HORSES

White grew up with horses: "In the days of my childhood, a horse, or several of them, was as much a part of one's equipment as one's hat. Every house had its horse block and its hitching posts, or its hitching rail, at which dozed saddle horses, one for each member of the family, young or old . . ." When anyone wanted to go anywhere, he rode on horseback, even for short-distance errands, and "people went to formal luncheons on horseback, and riding clothes were perfectly proper wear for such occasions . . .

"Some people maintained their own stables and corrals, but most boarded their animals at one of the two or three large livery stables near the center part of town. It used to cost $10 a month for feeding, grooming, saddling and delivering twice each day. About nine o'clock, and again about two [a Spanish groom] could be seen loping easily, sidewise in his saddle, his right hand full of lead ropes to the cluster of his charges, with possibly a 'trusty' or so following free . . ."

He reminisced about the livery stables here: how the attendants fitted the horse to the youthful abilities of its riders. He remarked about 'another class of specialists' — ladies' horses:



Betty at Stable Gate — Mrs. H. White

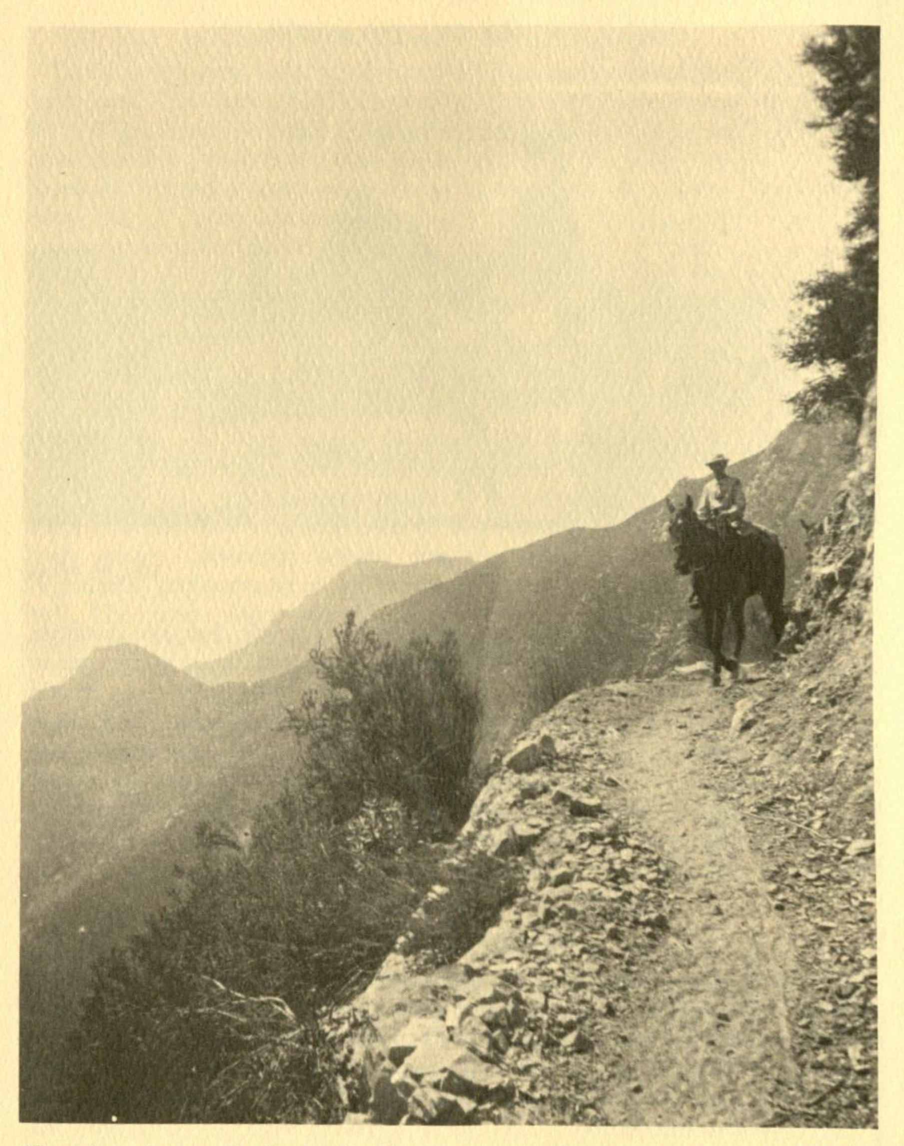
"They might be as spirited as you please, or as gentle, but two qualities they must have: they must stand still to be mounted; and they must be trained to endure long, flapping skirts . . . Most ladies had to be boosted up by aid of a hand under a foot, or stepped aboard from a high horse block, with the animal standing steady . . . once mounted, the posture was twisted and cramped. Somehow the most skillful of them made it secure: a fact that enlists my wonder and admiration . . . Spanish trainers put in a lot of time riding about with a flapping blanket hung down one side; and a good 'ladies' horse' brought a high price — as much as $75 or $100.

A RIDING ENTHUSIAST

As a boy he spent much time visiting the fine saddleries here, enjoying the odor of the leather products and inspecting the gear which more affluent customers purchased for their steeds. Few of the more elaborate articles were necessary for the youths if they had the proper spurs and a low-crowned Stetson hat with a stiff brim and a hatband of carved leather, bright bead work or woven horsehair.

The riding itself was all a matter of balance and grip, according to White, in a manner with which one "became fairly part of the horse." But in spite of this background, he never claimed to be a "horseman:" "In the days of the old West one rode a horse primarily to get places . . . We rode for pleasure at times, but much of that pleasure was contributed by the mountain trails, the wave-swept beaches or the wide deserts. Not one of us could have had an atom of fun riding and re-riding park bridle paths . . ."

There were plenty of trails to follow here. City directories in the early 1900s listed many trails and byways for residents and visitors to explore, and photographs in White's collection reveal the ruggedness of these territories.



"Precipitous Point on La Cumbre Trail" Mrs. H. White

SELDEN SPAULDING'S LANDMARKS

Selden Spaulding was slightly younger than White, but in *Santa Barbara, 1898-1925, as Seen by a Boy,* he describes scenes which White photographed, the Rattlesnake Canyon Trail:

Spaulding and his boyhood companions frequently walked from the county road to an Indian dam in Mission Canyon. The trail to the dam "ran close beside the creek bed under the live oaks and the sycamores that grew to

considerable size in and near the Canyon bottom; and so it was a trail of lights and shadows where the imaginative boy might hope to see any of the denizens of the Mountain Wall, save only the grizzly bear . . .

"In those youthful days the walk . . . from the big turn at the bridge of Rattlesnake Canyon Road to the dam, and on to Tin Can Shack was held by me to be the most beautiful of our coastal trails . . . Though it has undergone many changes as the years have passed, it still is very beautiful and very interesting, especially in the springtime when the grass is green on



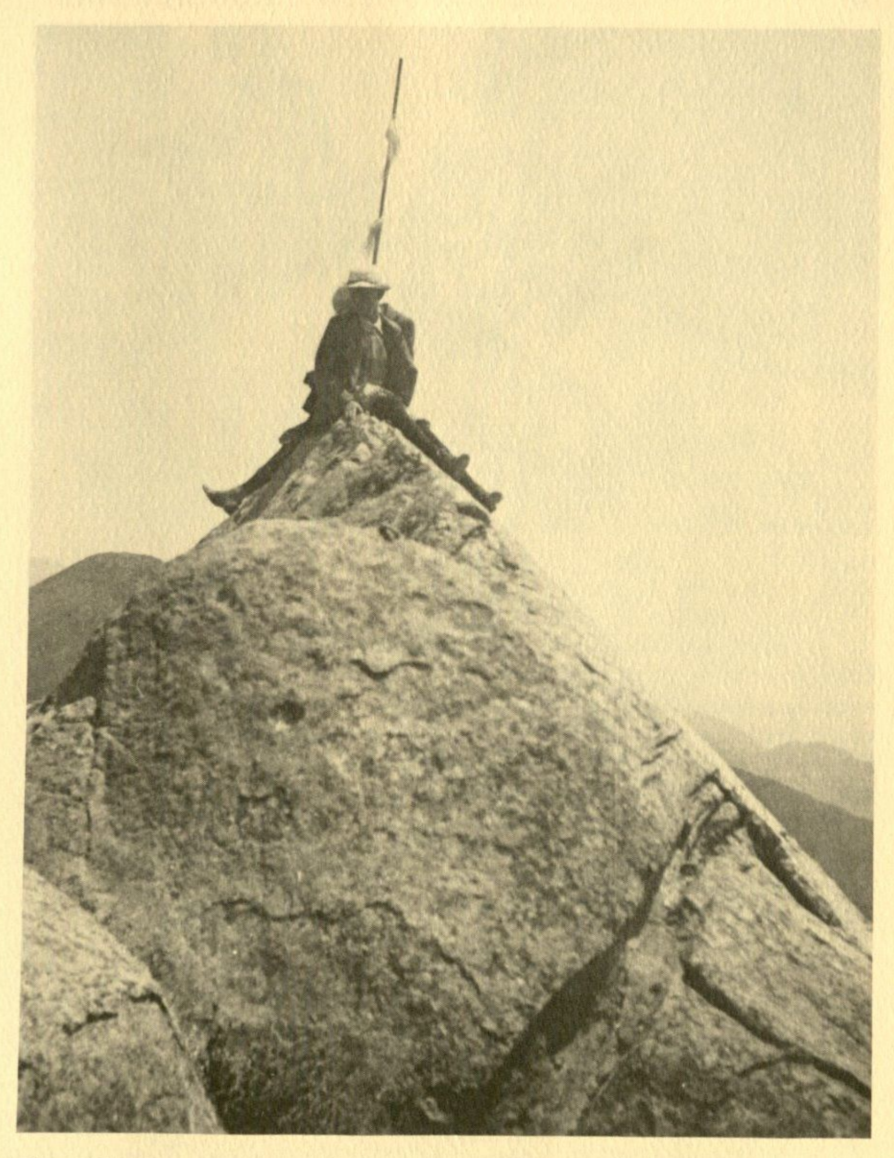
"The Rattlesnake Trail" Mrs. H. White

the slopes, when the Mariposa lilies are in bloom in their several well known colonies, and when the clear, cool water is running from pool to pool in the stream bed . . ."

A little way above the dam there was a flat where "at some time in the not too distant past, a countryman had taken a fancy to the place and had built a little shack of flattened tin cans on a crazy framework of chaparral stems. For this reason, the place was known as 'Tin Can Flat.' It was a very



Tin Can Shack, Rattlesnake Canyon — Mrs. H. White



"The Highest Peak in the Mountains" Mrs. H. White

pleasant place indeed . . ." The builder of the shack departed, the structure disintegrated slowly, but the name persisted.

Selden Spaulding also described the Goleta Road, which White photographed: "The old Goleta road [Hollister Avenue] was not merely the County thoroughfare to the westward of Santa Barbara. It was very much more than this — a place of pleasant journeys in buggies and wagons and on horseback where many interesting incidents could be expected to take place . . .



Poplar-lined Road to Goleta S.B. Historical Society

"In our minds, the Goleta Road began at some undetermined point between Mission Street and the well known bend (where it now intersects with the extension of State Street) a half-mile farther on. It was a wide road of countless chuck holes that was dusty in summer and muddy in winter. Distances on it were measured from the Courthouse and each mile was marked by a heavy wooden slab set in the ground on the south side of the road and painted white with black numerals — "3," "4," or "5" as the case might be. Near the town an occasional tree, sometimes a Carolina Poplar, grew beside the usual 'California fence' that marked the side of the road; and behind these were hayfields that furnished feed for the almost numberless horses of the community . . .

"The first three or four miles of the Goleta road lay over gently rolling country very fair to behold. The 'five-mile marker' stood close to the fence on the last of three tiny hills . . .

"Beyond this lay the flat, low land that was the upper reaches of the Big Slough . . ."

CHINESE SERVANTS

Stewart Edward White referred to "the Californians' love for the old-fashioned Chinaman," saying that the reader must "go back at least into the Gay Nineties to get the full flavor of the relationship." You "adopted Chinamen into your household, or they adopted you" and his parents had them in their household and so did he and his wife when they lived here from the early 1900s to 1916.

"Almost anybody who was started out right, and who was not flagrantly obtuse, or harsh or unreasonable in other ways, could command generalized, responsible service. If his became known as a good household, he was never unsupplied with a good Chinaman."



Toy and Dogs, Sandyland Mrs. H. White

Consequently, in their early married life, Stewart and Betty "conducted our whole establishment on a one-Chinaman basis. We had a moderately good-sized house, with two guest rooms that were occupied most of the time by friends who followed the custom of early days by staying with us for months at a time. Toy took care of the whole show. He cooked all meals, served them and washed the dishes. He cleaned the entire house and made

the beds. He could and did, cook and serve, without a moment's hitch of delay or pause, for dinner parties of ten or twelve . . ."

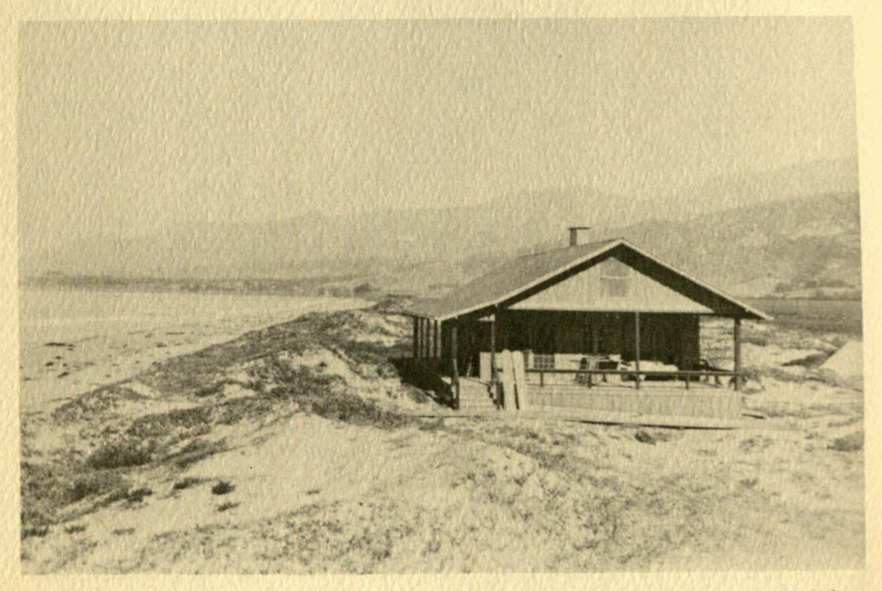
For $40 a month he shopped for their vegetables and other food, never purchasing more than the exact amount needed for the family. The house was in order by mid-afternoon, when he took time off to dress in beautiful brocades and Chinese shoes, a stiff black skullcap on the pigtail hanging down his back, headed for Chinatown until time to cook dinner.

While in the mid-1870s and the 1880s some of the servants were recently from China and had to learn American ways quickly, by the late 1890s oriental servants were scarcer, but more knowledgeable of American ways because of long residence here.

Toy was their household help for years, adapting himself to riding with them when they procured their first automobile, to their beach cottage at Serena for a weekend visit. Garbed in fine brocade, he sat stiffly and impressively on the rear seat. As in many households, there was genuine devotion between master and servant, and when Toy bad good-bye as many Chinamen did to return to his native land, the Whites were misty-eyed.

Stewart had grown up with these immigrants. As a small boy he and his brothers had enjoyed the New Years' treats set out in oriental stores, and witnessed pyrotechnic displays in Chinatown, when the celebration included heavy ropes of firecrackers hanging from a horizontal staff suspended from Chinatown shops:

"Up these ropes ran the crackling fire of explosions. They writhed and smoked and spat in a grand and soul-satisfying racket, and in the middle of the street bamboo-covered bombs whanged away like heavy artillery, and on the upper gallery of the veranda of the joss house men beat great gongs . . ."



White's Sandyland Cottage Mrs. H. White



Joel Fithian and Friends Mrs. H. White

WHITE'S DIVERSIONS

Santa Barbara was so familiar to White that it was seldom mentioned in his literary works, even though he told in *Speaking for Myself* of the many eastern and mid-western visitors who were referred to him on their tours of our "exotic" area.

He could not understand why "so many people look on this job of authorship as worshipful," nor did he enjoy observing from his home at the corner of Santa Barbara and Los Olivos Streets, the drivers of tour busses pointing out his house as the "Home of the Celebrated Author."

The Whites had friends here with whom they enjoyed their own diversions, including many outings to Sandyland, which he and Joel Fithian were promoting as a vacation spot, and which White claimed to have named. And he had his writing, from which he finally was distracted by so many visiting "friends of friends" that he moved to Burlingame.

However, the Whites visited his family here, and Betty's aunt, Antonia Marin, and he came back during the early stages of World War I to enlist, with the help of Joel Fithian, recruits for a battalion of volunteers. He had joined up with a cavalry troop in April, then switched to raising recruits for a volunteer regiment of field artillery:

"In a few weeks, with the enthusiastic aid of many old friends, we had actually signed up a whole battalion, a large proportion of whom were hard-bitten cowboys, rangers, out-of-door old-timers . . ."

They were called the Grizzlies. After the war was over, he represented Santa Barbara as an Army major in the forming of the American Legion.



Guests at Sandyland Mrs. H. White

AN EXCITING ERA

In a reflective mood in *Dog Days* White summarizes the exciting era in which he and other Santa Barbarans lived:

"It seems to me, when in a self-congratulatory mood, that my span of life has been laid in about as interesting a period of the world's progress as I could have chosen. I can remember the first telephones, the first incandescent lights. I was part of the horse transport age before its integrity had been weakened by even a thought of the 'horseless carriage.'

"I was one of those hopeful pioneers who experimented with two cylinders and eight horsepower over the wheel-track roads of California. I have seen horses practically superseded as a means of transportation. I have seen the beginnings of so many things, all of which have profoundly affected the kind of life we live.

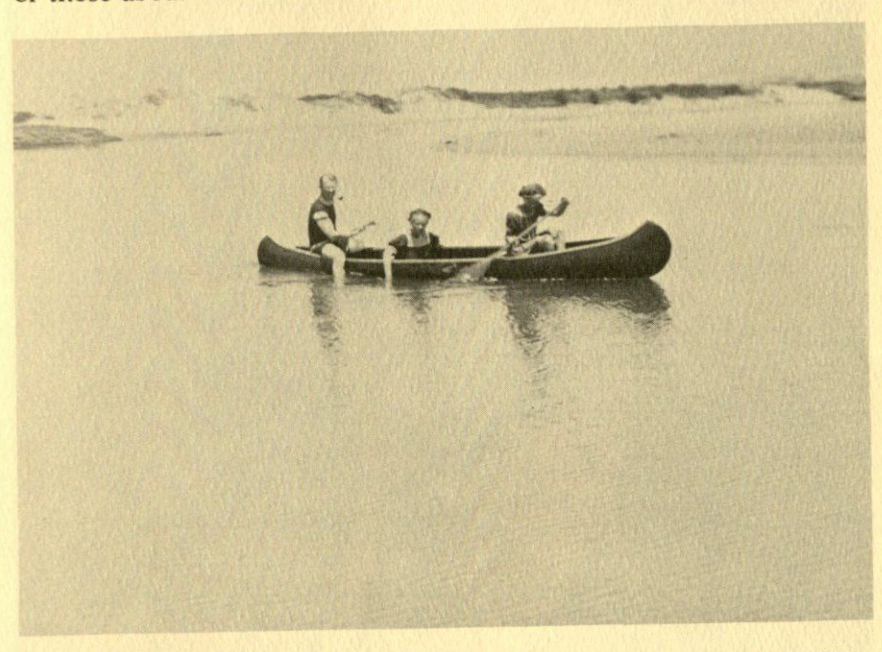
"The West was new when I was young. There were then no thoughts of, no need for, bag limits, or propagation of game, or game refuges, or private preserves, or posted lands . . ."

Likewise, he pointed out, there were few good roads, the absence of which were a deterrent to auto travel. But in those days, "one made one hundred and fifty miles a day, thankfully, and learned how to drive as accurately backward as ahead, and camped where night found one by streamside, and no fences, no 'auto camps,' not even designated camping places . . . But with improving roads and cars, and the resultant increasing accessibility, camping lost much of its charm — at least to one who had known the old thing . . ."

On the other hand, poor roads could be a hindrance to "swift" travel to Los Angeles. He and Rob Wagner endured a one-day-long excursion to Ventura, on their way to Los Angeles, which, according to White, included being delayed at the foot of Casitas Pass, walking back eight miles to

telephone to a Santa Barbara mechanic to find out what to do for a balky motor, and then later the same day encountering difficulties on grades in the Casitas Pass which required Rob Wagner's physical prowess in pushing the car up grades.

In retrospect, his experiences in Santa Barbara seem as fascinating as any of those about which he wrote for a vast male readership.



Canoeing at Sandyland — Mrs. H. White

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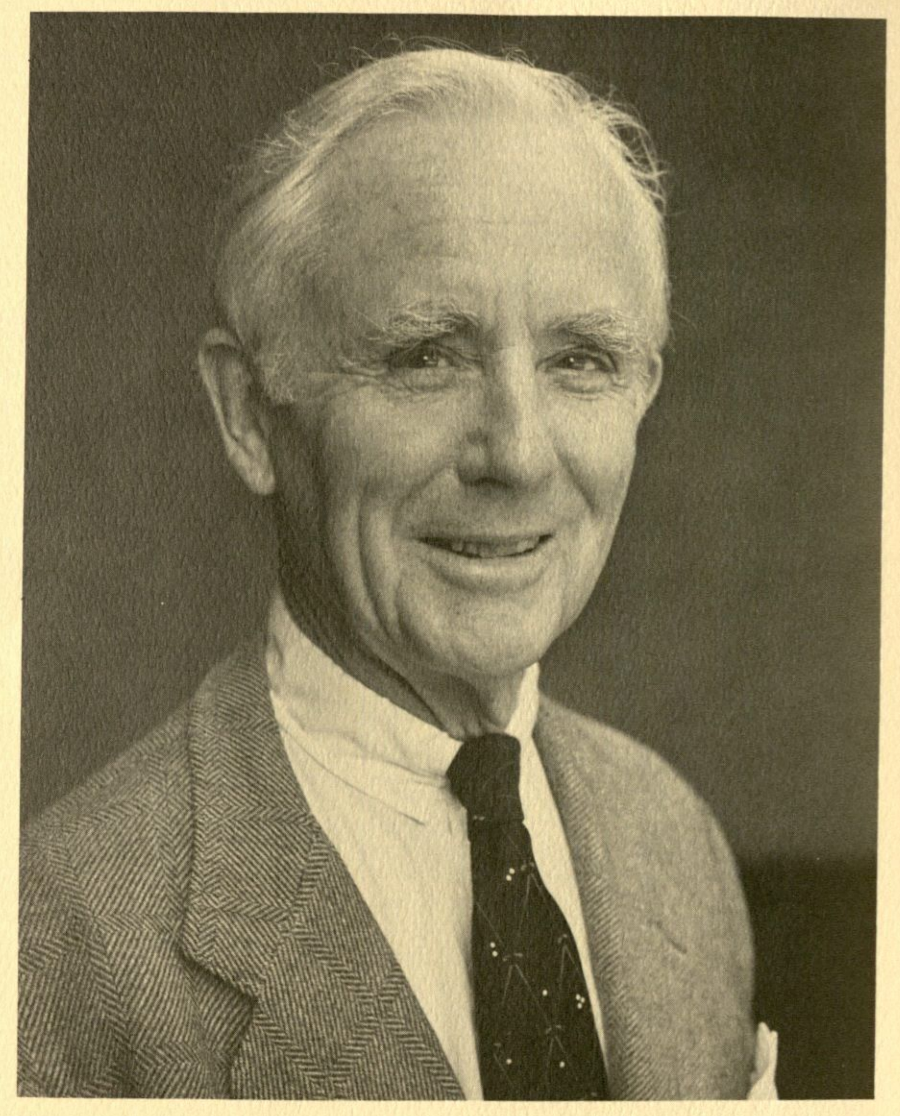
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Mr. Danily Bell — Santa Barbara Historical Society

OUR PRESIDENT

Our new president, Mr. Danily Bell, is a native Californian, but with a Northern California background. His parents came to San Francisco from Canada in 1904, so they experienced the severe earthquake and fire there in 1906, losing everything, as did many other Bay area residents. Mr. Bell grew up hearing stories of that long-ago event, and became familiar with Marin County history, where the family lived, after his birth in San Francisco.

He attended grammar school in San Anselmo, and Tamalpais Union High School. He majored in history and economics at Stanford, from which he graduated, and secured his Master of Business Administration from Harvard University.

Four years' service in the Pacific interrupted his business career during World War II. He retired as Commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve. Then he joined Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith, Inc., in Beverly Hills, where he was employed for thirty yeras.

Mr. Bell was involved in many civic organizations and projects while he lived in Beverly Hills, where he was city treasurer for twenty years. He was also head of the West Los Angeles Community Chest drives for two years and was president of the Beverly Hills branch of the American Red Cross for six years. He is a past president of Stanford Associates.

In Santa Barbara, he is a member of the Valley Club, the Santa Barbara Club, the Santa Barbara Rotary Club, a director of the Cottage Hospital and president of the Montecito Association.

Mr. Bell's love of history extends to his boyhood in Marin County, and early trips with his family down the coast, when motoring was more of a chore than it is today, and often involved many tire changes on each leg of a journey.

He and his wife, the former Laura Louise Wilder, came to Santa Barbara to make their home in 1974. Mrs. Bell spent most of her girlhood in Montecito, and attended Howard School and Santa Barbara Girls' School. She also returned to Santa Barbara to live with their two daughters while Mr. Bell was in the service. They frequently visited relatives here during their Beverly Hills residency, so Santa Barbara is familiar to them.

S.H.R.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Persons interested in becoming docents at the Historical Museum are invited to meet in the Museum Courtyard 136 E. De la Guerra St., at 9 a.m. on Wed., Sept. 7.

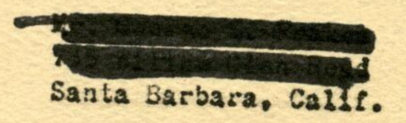
The training program, offered every other year, consists of 21 Wednesday morning meetings and field trips, reading assignments and discussions.

For more information, call Adele Wojciechowski at the Historical Museum, 966-1601.

Docents are needed Sunday afternoons at Fernald House and the Trussell-Wincheser Adobe. To join the training class call Mrs. Mark Church, the chairman of the Women's Project Committee at 682-1005.

Starting Sept. 1, the new Library hours will be from 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. Tues. - Fri.

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE
SANTA BARBARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
136 EAST DE LA GUERRA STREET
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93101



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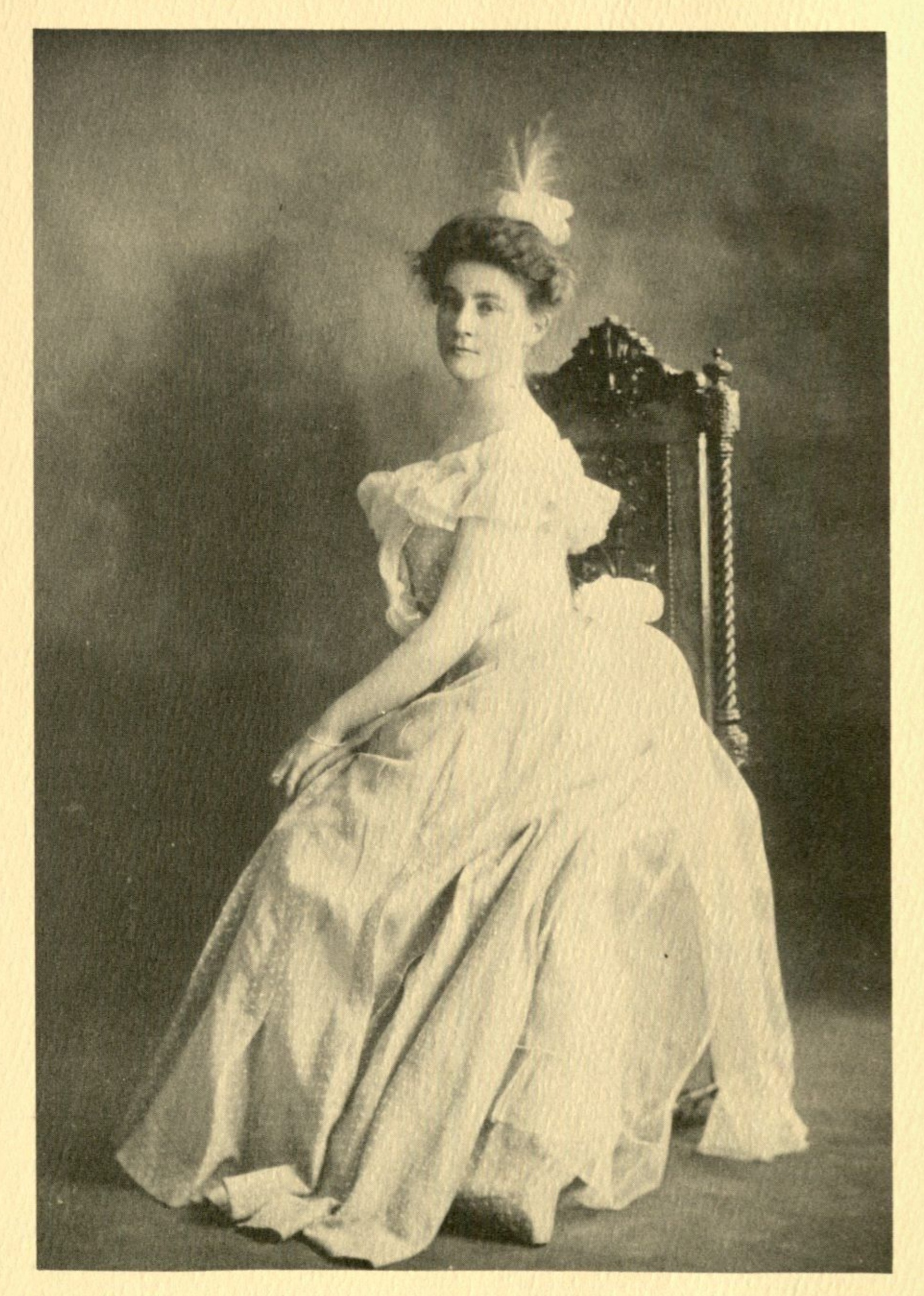


John S. Lincoln

Anna B. (Lincoln) Ellis

Vol. XXIX, No. 3

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Louise Lincoln

Anna B. (Lincoln) Ellis

JOHN AND LOUISE LINCOLN

By Anna B. (Lincoln) Ellis*

John Spencer Lincoln, the third and youngest son of Amasa and Abby Lincoln of Hingham, Massachusetts and Kalamazoo, Michigan, respectively, was born August 11, 1874, in the Lincoln House (Upham Hotel) at De la Vina and Sola Streets, Santa Barbara. Arriving in 1869, Amasa Lincoln had built the Lincoln House, then had sold it and only returned during Mrs. Lincoln's confinement and the birth which took place in the upstairs west front bedroom. Later they moved to a two-story Victorian house at 1535 Chapala Street (at Arrellaga).

The Lincolns also had property at the corner of De la Vina and Micheltorena, where Mrs. Lincoln's aunt, Abigail Putnam, built a two-story Victorian house and Mr. Lincoln's aunt, Caroline Ryan, built one next door. Neither of these houses are now standing.

Later, the Lincolns built a shingle cottage at 1511 De la Vina Street, next to Mrs. Putnam's corner cottage. This house is still standing, and is painted orange. It appears to be one story, but as the rear end of the lot was much lower, the dining room and kitchen were reached by going downstairs. This home became John's after his mother died.

After his sale of the Lincoln House, Amasa Lincoln went into real estate with Alonzo Crane. He bought up a number of town lots before he became cashier of the First National Gold Bank with Mortimer Cook.

John attended Santa Barbara schools and with an engineering career in view entered Stanford University in 1894.

About this time he had become enamored with Louise Stanwood, the lovely younger daughter of the William Henry Stanwoods of (Maine and) Santa Barbara.

John's Letters to Louise Stanwood

During the following years, many colorful love letters (which Louise saved) passed between them. These bring many interesting insights into events and feelings of that time. John first addressed her "My dear Louise," later with more endearing salutations like "My darling little one," "My dearest Louise," and "My little sweetheart," and signed himself, "Always, your Jack." The following are excerpts from John's letter in his freshman year at Stanford:

December 30, 1894: You don't know how surprised and pleased I was to receive the photo by which you so kindly remembered me at Christmas. Many thanks for it . . . . I told the fellows that I had received a photo of my sister and asked them if they didn't see the resemblance. They replied, "No, you're not good looking enough," and I was squelched . . . .

We are having a jolly time up here, eating, sleeping, playing cards and working once in awhile, to add a little spice to life. There are just four of us in the house and we certainly are the cream, that is, in our own estimation. If we don't all end up with gout or some other dreadful illness, it will be a wonder, as people have sent the fellows candy, fruit and all kinds of cake, mince pies, pineapples, bananas, oranges, apples, nuts, tobacco, etc., etc., etc. Oh, we're right in line!

What do you think of our football team? 12 to 0! Well, well. They can't

*Anna B. (Lincoln) Ellis is a native Santa Barbaran who has contributed several valuable historical articles to Noticias.

touch the Leland Stanford Junior University if it has a long name.

He signed himself "brother" in this letter, as his older brother, Henry, had married Louise's older sister, Annie (Stanwood).

Amasa Lincoln's Death

John was in his third year at Stanford when his father died in 1897. In a carriage accident he was thrown out upon his back, injuring his kidneys. He died of kidney failure. By the 1890s, with slow growth in Santa Barbara and taxes, his investments could have been a financial problem for him.

In a contemplative mood on the day after his father's birthday in September, 1898, John wrote to Louise:

. . . Yesterday was the anniversary of Father's birthday and he would have been 65. It seems young compared with the age of so many men who are still in good health and actively engaged in business. However, his business worries were so great that I sometimes think it is better as it is, rather than that he should be living with the burden of worries on his mind.

He was like a great many cases we hear of — a man whose advice to others was always sound and invaluable to other men regarding their affairs, but who could never seem to apply those principles to his own affairs and so provide for a comfortable old age.

His character was spotless, however little attention he paid to religion, and if there is a Heaven and he was denied entrance to it on that account, I hope when I die I may be sent to the blackest pit in Hell.

It is needless to say that I realize what others have found out — we do not know what priceless treasures we possess until we lose them . . . .

Amasa Lincoln's death was a great blow — not only in John's loss of his father, but in the collapse of his career. He not only did not have the funds to finance his college education, but as his father died owing some debts, he had to return to Santa Barbara to support and care for his mother who was desolated at their loss.

His older brothers had both married and had families; Lyman in Hawaii and Henry in Santa Barbara, who had taken his father's place as cashier in the First National Gold Bank (now the First Interstate Bank), and was not free to give his mother the time and attention she needed. So it was left to John to take over.

This was a difficult time. He was adjusting to his new job as salesman in Santa Barbara at the Reverend Mr. Bentz's Oriental import store at 1229 State Street in the Hawley Building. Later it was moved across the street to the corner of State and Victoria, catty-cornered from the Arlington Hotel.

Mrs. Lincoln wrote friends that it was difficult to face the fact that she was "penniless." They had been living in Abigail Putnam's house, who had returned to her old home in Dedham, Massachusetts. Now they moved to the 1511 De la Vina Street cottage so they could rent the Putnam house.

A Trip to San Francisco

A few months later John and his mother went to visit her sister, Lydia, who was ill in San Francisco, traveling partly by stagecoach. John addresses it, "Sleeping car at Surf." Since the railway did not run from Goleta to Surf at that time, it was necessary to take the stage to Surf, as he recounts:

May 1, 1897, 9:30 p.m.: Here I am after an eventful day sitting alone in my glory with the wind blowing a gale outside and the waves making a continual roar.

Well, let me begin at the beginning. Mother routed out about 4:30 a.m., but I staid in bed until after 5; had breakfast and then finished packing, strapping trunks, etc. Harry and Annie and Aunt Cal came over just before the stage arrived, which was almost 7:30. We finally got our numerous parcels aboard and were off with only one other passenger besides ourselves. The ride was fine with the exception of a little cold wind from Goleta to Cooper's.

Reached Arroyo Honda at 12 and had a good lunch, which I more than did justice to, as I was hungry as a bear. From there we had wind and it grew worse and worse until we struck Lompoc at 5:45 this afternoon. I don't remember being colder in my life and I had on an overcoat, muffler, gloves and a big robe wrapped around me. When we got off at the hotel in Lompoc for supper I could hardly move. My fingers were so stiff that I couldn't snap my grip together.

Mother got very cold, but was not tired by the trip and felt very well after she had something hot to eat. We stayed at Lompoc until 6:30 and then drove here, where we arrived at 7:30. Checked trunks, etc., and then the train came in and we got aboard.

There are just three of us to hold this car down tonight: Mother, our fellow passenger on the stage and myself. We stand still all night and leave about 5 tomorrow a.m.; change into day car at 7. I forgot to say I lost my hat between Las Cruces and the San Julian, but recovered it after a chase. Then just as we were about half a block from the Lompoc Hotel I lost it again and drove up in front of that inn with my hair on end like a Pawnee chief's; you know how it looks when it gets messed up. A small boy recovered my headgear, for which I thankfully gave him a dime. From Lompoc here we had a stage with sides up, so didn't feel the wind, and the road for that distance beats anything I ever saw — just like glass. I took nine photos on the way but don't know much about the results. The first film spoiled as the shuttle [shutter?] failed to work and when I did get it to snap I had my hand in front of it. I seems to be all right now. I took two from the moving stage.

I hope you will excuse the pencil, but it is much more convenient. Take good care of youself. With all the love in the world. Tell the folks Mother is all right.

Shortly after this he writes Louise, who with the Stanwoods was camping at Shepard's ranch near Carpinteria:

Monday, May 24, 1897: To think of such a fine day as this and I am shut up in this store instead of wandering up the canyon at Shepard's with you. What luck! Why couldn't the sun have come out yesterday?

I reached the station last night about twenty minutes early. I got off at the freight depot and took the electric. It was the old-new one and Will [her brother, William Stanwood] was the motorman. He is dead on to the job and we went humming. I went over to the house [at 313 W. Arrellaga Street] and then came back and caught him on his down trip and rode to the end of the line [beach] and back with him.

He gave me his key and I went into your house and looked in the dining

room and the sitting room for the Solio [photo] paper, but did not find it. Where could you have hidden it? I felt like a burglar.

This morning I got some of the American paper which Hayward says he thinks is better than the Solio as it brings out the white clearer. I send you prints of the two other films. They are on American paper. Do you think they are better than the Solio prints? I have taken advantage of the sun this morning and printed about fourteen of duplicates for Mother. *[This was a hobby they worked on together. I still have some fine indoor photos they did of our living room on Bath Street.]*

The postman's wheel came off in the car track out here this a.m. and the U.S. Mail was scattered in consequence; no damage done.

Please tell Ann [Louise's sister] that I attended her order for carnations this a.m.: 5 dozen white at 15¢ per dozen. Miss Sexton had gone to Los Angeles for an indefinite stay and the man didn't know what shade of green ribbon was used before [for another funeral], so I picked out what I thought was correct.

Will [her brother] seemed glad to know you were well fixed.

Louise took a boat trip north to San Francisco to visit Mrs. J. W. Valentine, a family friend.

Sept. 11, 1898: Phew!!!! Hot? no name for it. The worst we have had this summer, I'm sure. Lucky girl to be out of it, unless you are catching it in 'Frisco.

. . . We had an English man-of-war in yesterday with about 350 men. She stopped for grub as officers and all were down to hardtack and bacon. One order was for 900 loaves of bread. She left last evening for British Columbia. The town was full of Tars, every other one more than half full. Some of them said they hadn't been ashore for seven months. The Marines with bright red coats and little caps stuck on the sides of their heads looked very funny . . . .

I have been doing the scullery maid act today, and so far have only broken one saucer, which is pretty good for a fellow who sees as little china as I do, don't you think? . . . Mother burned one of her hands quite badly while getting breakfast . . . . She said to get some sweet oil. Of course there wasn't any in the house, which is about the first time she never had any. I finally got some of Pedro [Pedro Rodriguez, their next door neighbor] and she held her hand in it and then I got Witch Hazel, which worked better, and she feels fairly comfortable now . . . .

John's Shopkeeping Duties

September 12, 1898: Your postal from Port Harford reached me this morning. I am sorry you felt sick, as I hoped you would escape. I trust the rest of the voyage was more successful . . . . I saw Sam [her older brother] a little while ago and told him I had heard from you. He said, "She hasn't struck the worst yet."

Well, I'm up to my neck in Japanese straw, dust and microbes in Bentz's store. Have been unpacking the eight cases all a.m. and up to now (2 p.m.) and expect the rugs up soon. I'm sorry to say my back feels like old Tim's looks and I'm afraid I shall have to let Pedro [Rodriguez] tackle the rugs

. . . . It makes me crazy to think I can't get in and do a day's work without feeling like a cripple.

The goods in the cases are mostly old porcelains and there are some pretty pieces. We are unpacking in the empty store and it is much pleasanter than doing it on the sidewalk. I have sent Jim [Swett?] to go down for Harmer to come up and help Pedro with the rugs as I find it hurts like sin to pick up even a small box. Chump that I am . . . . the rugs are just arriving and being rolled out on the sidewalk. I hate to look at them. Jim says Harmer can't come, but he has gone to look for someone else.

I heard from Bentz [Nathan, the son] this morning, and he says he will leave Japan September 23. That will bring him here about October 12. The old folks are beginning to worry already.

Au revoir, darling, and take good care of yourself.

Three other letters reveal life as it was then:

September 16, 1898: . . . I'm expecting to finish the rugs this afternoon if I'm not interrupted . . . .

The kids [his brother and wife, Ann, with baby Warren] got off on the p.m. train yesterday with enough baggage to take them around the world. Baby carriage, chair, trunk, three hampers and various small bundles. Trunk roped up as if it was going across the continent instead of four miles out of town. [To Miramar Hotel!]

September 21, 1898: . . . In the evening after I had a cigar I wandered down to Dr. Boeseke's and got my hair treated, which he winds up with what he calls a few "sparks." These feel like red hot irons going into you and he scatters them generally all over me.

Last night while he had the machine going he took the lamp out of the room to make it dark, and then I could see little sparks on the end of my hair and mustache. Every hair on your head stands straight up, and it looks very funny. I don't suppose it will do my hair any good, but it may keep what I have from falling out . . . . *[It didn't, as he was quite bald.]*

September 26, 1898: Still raining and no signs of letup. The fall up until this morning is reported as two and half inches, and it must have rained fully half an inch since then. Everything is afloat and up to your knees.

Pedro [Rodriguez] has been inquiring about the next shipment of goods. He has quite a job on hand with Capt. Ellis who has returned from the Klondike. He is going to grade his lot and put in a stone wall on Micheltorena Street and pull down that big hedge. He has bought wheels for the boys and there are general signs of more money. I hope his wife has been wise enough to secure a cinch on a good portion of the rocks before he gets a chance to gamble them away.

John's Desire to Marry

By 1898 John bespeaks his earnestness, love and concern as Louise delays in committing herself to marrying him. The following letter is written to her in San Francisco where she is visiting Mrs. Valentine:

September 18, 1898: I have just been to the P. O. and received your letter of the 15th. Louise, I am both frightened and happy and hardly know which way to feel yet, although my heart tells me to be happy. When I came to the part of your letter where you say, "The great thing that I have feared

to tell you, you must know by this time," I felt as if the bottom had dropped out of everything because I thought you were going to say that you found out you didn't love me the way I want; but on turning the page, I came to this, "Do you think I will make you happy?" and my heart gave a great jump, as it occurred to me that you will be mine. It is this last that you meant, isn't it, dear?

For God's sake, answer right away and put me out of this suspense. Answer even if you only have time to put "yes" or "no" in a postal.

And yet in reading the letter over and over as I have done a dozen times already, I can't help thinking you do love me and that what I have been waiting for so long is at last at hand.

You wouldn't say such kind things about my letters and [be?] wanting to see me if you intended to tell me it is all over. Another sentence of yours gives me an idea and I wonder if it can be so. You say, "I want to be fair to you; you remember all we have said together." Can it be that you think your letters have disenchanted me and that I have found mistakes in them which will make me love you less? Is this what you mean, you dear girl? The thought only came to me because you have not had the advantages that most girls have. Louise, on my oath . . . . I have found nothing in the two letters you have written . . . or in any I have received from you before, to make me love you one iota less or lessen my respect for you in any way whatever. I entreat you to believe me, darling, and to put this idea from your mind for good and all . . . .

Your Mother goes to Miramar tomorrow p.m. as Harry [his brother] leaves for Los Angeles Tuesday morning. I was up to your house last night and had a visit with your Mother and escorted her to Mrs. T.'s, [Mrs. Dixie Thompson] where she spends the nights. *[She would never stay alone in her house.]* She was in the store yesterday.

Who is Mr. Chenning? You didn't say anything except that he took you to the theatre. Let him beware!

I am glad you are to see Modjeska. No, I never saw her.

Almost mail time, so good-by until tomorrow, dear one, and remember how anxiously I am awaiting your reply to this.

John was indeed perceptive, as he had finally found the real basis for Louise's reluctance to marry him. Not having gone beyond grade school, as in her teens she was ill for some time with rheumatic fever, she felt in awe of him as a "college" man, and worried that he would compare her unfavorably with college-educated women.

Medical Costs, 1898

October 21, 1898: Another Sunday on hand and no little girl to go and see; this makes the fourth to be killed since you left . . . .

Sam [Stanwood] just gave me a ride to the P. O. and enquired about you. I told him you expect to be home next Friday. Sam took the Spauldings to the Ojai after all (as rain had let up) and the road was so heavy going up the Casitas that it made one of his mares sick . . . . Said for about six miles he couldn't drive more than a hundred feet at a time without resting the team.

Had quite a surprise last night. I asked [Dr.] Boeseke for his bill *[John had been losing weight.]* and fully expected it would be at least thirty or

thirty-five dollars, as I had been going to him since early August and for the last two weeks have taken the electricity nearly every night.

What do you think it was? Eight dollars! ! When he handed it to me I looked at him kind of funny and asked him what he meant by that. He said I asked for my bill and there it was. I told him he was a chump and that it wasn't a quarter enough, but he wouldn't change it. How the deuce he expects to make a living, I don't see.

Why, he's done a good twenty dollars' worth of manual labor just turning that old wheel, to say nothing of the prescriptions and advice he has given me. And what's more, he is doing some good, too, although the gain is slow as he said it would be. I have gained about two pounds and can see that I feel much better, when I look back on six or seven weeks. I swear by the Doc after this.

Haven't heard any word from Bentz, so don't know if he will get here tomorrow or not — rather think he will. Good-by independence! Am rather curious to know if he will raise my salary. I suppose this sounds mercenary, but it's money that oils the wheels, after all, and don't think I'm miserly — well au revoir, my darling, I am longing to see you.

In a letter to Louise in "Mountain View," Carpinteria, he writes:

May 18, 1899: . . . It seems as if you had been gone a month already. I've half a mind to chase down and kidnap you and bring you right back. Every time I go out the door I catch myself looking up and down the street for you.

Old man Bentz died on the 15th and was buried the next day. I closed the store and put crêpe on the door and spent the morning hunting pallbearers. Mrs. Bentz wanted them to be ministers, as Mr. Bentz was a Reverend: Dr. Carrier was to conduct the service, so that put him off the list, and I had to chase around to try and find six others. According to the cyclometer on my wheel, I went 25 miles, so got in a good bit of exercise. I found the two Reverend Grants out of town. Mr. Forbes had a wedding; Ramsey wouldn't act, so I could get only three, Westenberg, Pier of the Christian Church and Parker of the Holiness. I filled out the other three with John Diehl, Harmer and the lame Frink.

The service was at the house and very simple but impressive. Only a few neighbors and friends there. I went out with the Mater who carried an ivy wreath which she made herself. I had something sent from Spence's. We didn't go to the cemetary [sic].

Mrs. Bentz went to Pasadena yesterday with the oldest son, [Nathan] and Otto will go Saturday after packing and shipping her furniture, etc. She is evidently gone for good. I am going out tonight to help him pack the organ and a big chair his father used. I went out last night and spent a little time with him. They will leave the house empty. Asked me if I wanted to sleep out there but I refused with thanks. Don't feel called upon to go to that length . . . .

Made $1.50 yesterday and 1¢ the day before — getting rich fast. I've been blowing myself. Bought that big chair you told me of and it's a peach. Also invested in knickers and golf stockings, and am a cure for sore eyes when togged up — looks like a body floating in the air, as my legs are sort of out

of sight except with the aid of a telescope. It is very comfortable for wheeling and when you come back I'll give you the honor of my company on the tandem.

I received Ann's note. Tell her I'll bring the guitar and apron if I can find it. I shall telephone about 7:30 p.m. Saturday. If you will, you might speak to the Shepards about meeting me Sunday morning [at the Carpinteria depot]. I don't think I'll try the wheel.

The eldest son, Nathan, took over Bentz's Santa Barbara store aftrer the Reverend Bentz's death. The brothers, Phillip and Otto, ran branch stores in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The store did very well for years with the Arlington Hotel catty-cornered from the store. Many wealthy visitors were collectors of fine china, rugs, silks, jewelry and furniture. John continued working there until 1936.

Stage Travel, 1900

In 1900 John went to San Francisco to be with his mother who was to have surgery on May 4, 1900, for cancer. It still was necessary to take the stage to Los Olivos, where passengers boarded the narrow gauge railroad which took them to the northbound train at San Luis Obispo.

May 1, 1900, Los Olivos: Here I am so far on my way after a very pleasant day. Reached here at 5:30 p.m., about 45 minutes late. This was because we had only two horses on the stage from Santa Barbara up the mountain with a load of nine people. I and two other men walked about half the way up to help the poor brutes out.

The Stage Company had sent so many stages up the coast that they didn't have any horses left for the [San Marcos] line, and thought they would get along all right, as they usually have only one or two passengers at a time this way. Of course the biggest load they have had in weeks wanted to go unexpectedly this morning.

We had lunch at Cold Springs about 1, and from there had four horses, with one change, on to here. The day has been perfect except the last two or three miles, which were windy and cold. The road is fine and the view from the mountains way up. I found my duster invaluable and arrived here in very good shape thanks to it. Didn't need my overcoat except the last half hour.

Los Olivos doesn't amount to much, but this hotel seems neat. The dinner was fair. The train has come in from San Luis and brought so many passengers that several will sleep in the barn. I am very thankful we arrived first and secured rooms.

I am writing in mine now and my neighbor across the hall is evidently asleep as he is snoring so the partition shakes. I should like to chuck some water over the transom, but would feel cheap if it turned out to be a dizzy blonde like that sleeping car story.

I shall have to get up at 3 a.m. to catch that train and it is now after 10 p.m., but I'm afraid this snorer won't let me get to sleep. I can't lose him (or her?).

It is pitiful to see the ranches up here. The grain is not a foot high and very sparse at that.

I hate to think of what awaits me at the end of this trip up.

While John was in San Francisco visiting his mother after her surgery, he told Louise of calling on Mrs. Valentine, a long-time family friend, in a letter May 4, 1900:

. . . She enquired after you all and sent return love.

I told her we were engaged, as you said to do, and she said, "Oh, I told her you were when she was here." So that fell kind of flat . . . .

. . . I took a lot of (Mother's) things down to the basement and packed them in her trunk, until she is ready to move, which will be Tuesday. She has to drop that much expense as soon as possible. She paid $25 per week . . . and it will only cost her $30 or $35 per month at the boarding house, so you can see some difference.

There are other discussions in John's letters, as in the September, 1898 one regarding Louise's reluctance to marry him because of her "inferiority complex," but he finally won out. However, it was several years before his earnings of a small salary plus occasional commissions made it possible to marry her.

Their Married Life

His mother died in May, 1902 of cancer. John and Louise were married in 1903 and lived in the 1511 De la Vina Street house.

They both had a flair for the artistic. John set up attractive window displays at the store. They experimented with time exposure indoor photography and developing. In their basement "shop" John cut out wooden toys and Louise painted them. She also created tiny furnishings for a doll house. She was truly gifted, playing the piano beautifully "by ear," classical and operatic music. (She had no lessons.)

In the kitchen she cooked magical and delicious things (today's gourmet). Her flower and fruit arrangments were unique and striking, and she was asked to decorate for weddings. She also did the flowers at the Upham Hotel and the Woman's Club. She worked hours into the night making favors for a party. Her water colors in still life were fine. Everything was done with such seeming ease and poise — a gracious hostess.

As their daughters Frances and Marian (and I, their cousin) were all born in 1904 and 1905, we were constant companions. I practically lived at their home — which was conveniently on the way home from the old Washington School on Anacapa Street above Micheltorena. I often stayed for dinner or over night. I glimpsed their family life almost as well as my own, which was only a block away on Bath Street.

It was always evident that John adored his wife. In sitting her down to the beautifully appointed dinner table, he always pulled out her chair and kissed her before seating himself.

He was quick to reprimand his children if needed, but never in all the years did I ever hear him speak to Louise in other than a courteous manner.

Their friends, Harry and Frances Hollister, came in from their Winchester Canyon ranch to visit John and Louise. Their three sons, Harold, Stanley and Graham came with them to play with us. Their style was rough and tumble, which was hard on three little girls.

We all drove out to the ranch one summer day and were allowed to ride a pony around the corral. It was hot, dry and dusty, but fun.

The Hollisters' relatives, the Hales and Miss Ellen Chamberlain, lived in a mansion at Pedregosa and Laguna Streets. We were all invited to attend their Christmas party, held in the barn. A huge decorated tree reached the rafters. I had never seen such a big tree. All the little girls received dolls and candies.

John and Louise Lincoln's third daughter, Louise, was born in 1915. She was called Pete by her father, who hoped for a son. Others called her Babs.

The depression of the 1930s brought changes. The Hotel Arlington had gone with the 1925 earthquake, and the money for Oriental art pieces became scarce. Mr. Bentz turned things over to his second wife, a younger woman. She took charge and let John go in 1936.

The Lincolns lost their house and property that was mortgaged, and rented a house at 116 W. Islay Street. Their daughter, Babs, helped financially, as she worked at Morrey's Southern Seas Shop. Louise arranged flowers at the Upham Hotel, where they were given their dinners.

John's health failed. He has been troubled with "lumbago," but it was cancer and he died in 1939. Louise became "housemother" to several girls who attended Santa Barbara State College on the Riviera until it was moved to Goleta.

In 1954 her brother, Sam Stanwood died, leaving her a Victorian cottage on Arlington Avenue, where she lived the rest of her life. Their daughters all married: Marian to Dr. William H. Young, Louise to Marshall Bond, Jr. and Frances to Gordon B. Mitchell. The latter had two daughters, Marian (Mrs. Charles Dockham), and Nancy (Mrs. Don R. Hall). There are several great-grandchildren.

*THE GOLDEN YEARS OF THE CIRCUS IN SANTA BARBARA**

By Harold G. Davidson

"You can shake the sawdust from your shoes, but never from your heart." Cecil B. DeMille[1]

The sun was just rising over the hills of Montecito, and already there was a thin line of Santa Barbarans on each side of the mainline in the Southern Pacific yards near Milpas Street. The switchmen and yard engine were waiting to spot the first section of the circus train onto an industrial spur that made a giant curve, and then paralleled Salispuedes Street for several blocks. There was extra excitement in the air, for today it was a large circus, travelling in four sections, on one hundred cars.

The first section, appropriately named "The Flying Squadron," slowly nosed into the yards "ON TIME," and with a hissing of steam, and squeals from protesting brakes, came to a stop. The growing group of spectators surged forward for a closer look at the long-awaited arrival. The show's employees climbed down from the cars, and Circus Day had begun!

Aboard the first section, and packed in huge red wagons, were the cookhouse tent and equipment, the menagerie tent and blacksmith and harness shops, and other gear, depending on last night's loading. The train boss also had made certain that the boss canvasman, crew and equipment necessary to lay out the Santa Barbara lot got aboard this section. He even loaded up a few "donikers" (toilets to you!).

The first section was switched onto the spur track, and slowly backed to the location where it was to be unloaded. The heavy metal ramps or "runs" were pulled from beneath the end wagon on the flatcar, and put in place between the car and the ground, while other workers put steel plates in place over the space between cars. This location where the wagons were unloaded was referred to as the "runs," and became the focal point for the townspeople to witness the fascinating process of unloading the circus train. Santa Barbara had an excellent reputation among circus people, because it had a large lot, no more than a few hundred yards from the runs. Besides, the city license fee was only $100.00 a day!

The Elephants' Work

Spectators had to be alert, because while the above activities were proceeding, several cars of baggage stock (draft horses), and work elephants were being unloaded from the sides of stock cars by means of heavy wooden ramps. Soon shouts of Molly! Alice! Maude! and Babe! were heard, and the bulls were ready for work. Regardless of sex, circus elephants are called "bulls," or when a handler gets mad enough, the term is "rubber mule." Most circuses carried only females; the males had a tendency to get mean during the mating season, and would become troublemakers.

The baggage horses were loaded in the stockcars fully harnessed, standing close together, with bits and cruppers removed, and with an ingenious arrangment which took the weight of the collars off the necks of the horses.

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*This story is reprinted from La Reata, Summer, 1977, publication of Santa Barbara Corral of The Westerners. Mr. Davidson, a member of that and the Circus Historical Society, has lived here for 35 years. The author of Edward Borein, Cowboy Artist, is an art broker and appraiser.

[1] The Greatest Show on Earth, Paramount Pictures Corporation, 1952.

Thus, as they came down the ramps in the early morning, they were ready for work in teams of two, four, six or eight. Two teams moved to the runs, and the unloading of the circus began.

The "pull-over" teams, one on each side of the flats, had the job of pulling the wagons along the cars until they came to the runs. There it would be eased down the ramps to the ground by means of two snubbing posts and a huge rope hooked to the end of the wagon. Once on the ground, and away from the runs, a proper-size team would pull the wagon to the lot.

Things were happening on the lot. The boss canvasman and crew had arrived with a load of metal pins with white ribbons attached. The grass and weeds in places were knee-deep, and usually drenched with early morning dew, but it did not keep the audience away. The boss and his assistants, watched intently by Santa Barbara circus fans, laid out the entire lot with a long tape, and marked the position of each tent and pole with his metal pins. In this manner, he placed the Big Top, Menagerie Top, Side Show Tent, as well as the Cookhouse, Horse Tents, Dressing, Wardrobe, Harness, Repairs and Blacksmith Tents, in the most advantageous location on the circus grounds.

There was a fierce loyalty among the circus roustabouts, razorbacks and workers. *Their* circus was the best damn circus in the world, and they could set up and tear down faster than any other two-bit outfit around. Many of the workers were what society would call today, "hard-core unemployables," but for twenty dollars a month and all found, the circus attracted hardworking and loyal employees.

Along with arriving baggage wagons, there came upon the lot a very important individual, the Punk Boss. The circuses carried many bosses, but this one probably got the most attention. his job was to organize the horde of Santa Barbara boys (absent from school because of sore throats, headaches or Grandma's funeral) into a working force, without which the circus would have had a hard time putting up the show. The procedure was simple. You lined up and were given the magic Boy's Work Ticket. Then you were assigned to another boss who directed your efforts. After toiling five hours in a broiling sun, stretching canvas, carrying water, poles, seat stringers, jacks and planks, you exchanged your grubby Work Ticket for a Rush Seat for either the afternoon or evening performance. Even though the sturdiest of boys were boneweary, there was a sense of excited elation which could not be purchased for money. You had *earned* your ticket to the circus!

One of the most popular men on the show was the mail carrier, who quietly stepped down from one of the cars, and hurried off to the Santa Barbara Post Office with the circus letters to be mailed. What was more important, he picked up the mail at the General Delivery wicket addressed to circus personnel from friends and loved ones. As in the army, there was no call like mail-call.

The Cookhouse Tent

More wagons and workers were arriving on the lot, and the cookhouse tent was miraculously in the air, with smoke drifting from the stoves and ovens mounted in special kitchen wagons. Soon the word passed "The Flag

is Up" and the hungry men had their breakfast. The menu was simple, merely including orange juice, pancakes, bacon, ham and eggs, fried chicken, hot rolls, fried potatoes, toast, marmalade, jam and coffee. And you could have all the seconds you wanted. The circus, like the army, travelled on it's stomach. All supplies, including food, hay, feed and raw meat for the animals had been purchased from local sources. The circus left many dollars with Santa Barbara merchants.

By this time, the section was unloaded and pulled away, and the second section had arrived and was quickly shunted into position at the runs. This section carried the canvas and poles for the Big Top, the Side Show tent and equipment, cages and the heavily-carved, canvas covered tableau or parade wagons. The wild animal cages were unloaded and hurried to the lot, either to be pushed into place in the now-erected menagerie tent, or placed in its spot in the parade formation. The pushing was done by work elephants with heavy leather pads on their foreheads. Before leaving the subject of animals, it may come as a surprise that circus men regard the lumbering and the lovable bears as the most deadly and unpredictable animals in the menagerie.

While the canvas city was gradually taking form, another activity was under way. "Parade Call" had been sounded, and performers and bandsmen donned their costumes and uniforms, climbed onto a wagon or mounted horses. All performers, including the featured stars, were expected to "make parade," with clean costumes and a bright smile. Even the teamsters who handled the lines (never "reins" on a show) of the horses pulling the glittering wagons, were required to look neat, and have their shoes shined. Parade time was usually 10:30 A.M., unless the circus trains were late.

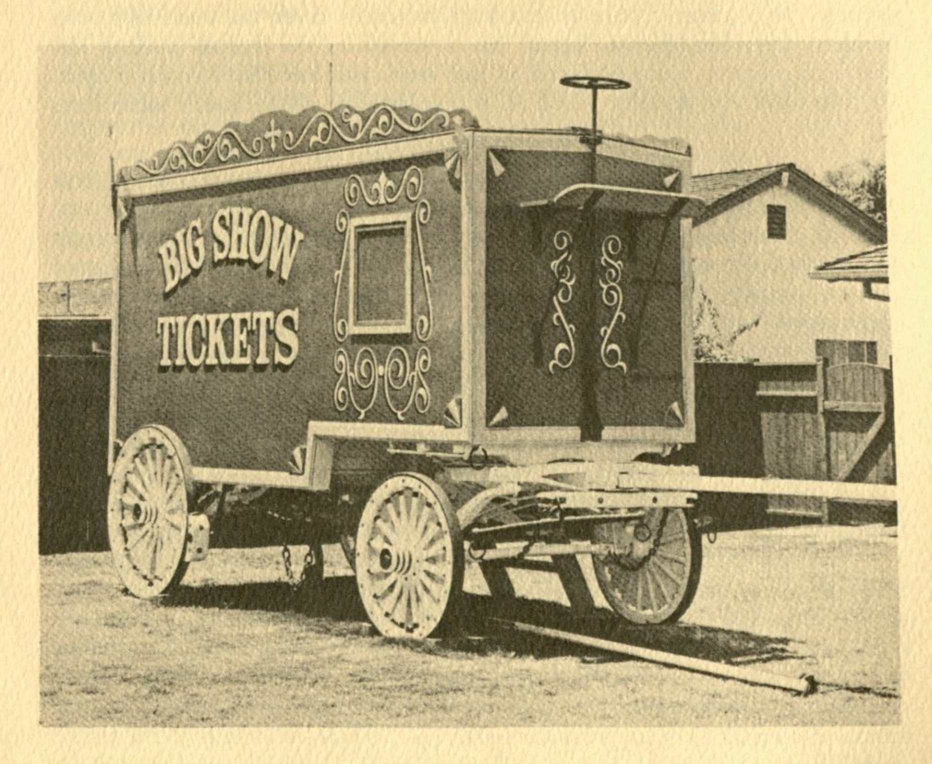
The Lure of a Parade

The purpose of the Grand, Triumphant, Colossal Street Parade was simple: to advertise the fact that the circus really *was* in town, and if you hurried, there might be a few tickets left for each performance. No spectacle yet devised by man, could equal the noise, color and sheer excitement of a circus parade. After a mounted group with the Stars and Stripes passed, there came the No. 1 Bandwagon, a huge wagon with gold-leaf carvings on all sides, pulled by matched teams of six, eight or ten horses, with waving red and white plumes attached to their nodding heads. Atop the wagon were members of the circus band, playing spine-tingling circus music. They could be heard coming half a mile away, and there is no record of a person falling asleep while a circus band was playing.

A succession of cages containing wild animals followed the Bandwagon, then came bespangled lady riders, clowns, cowboys, tableau wagons, camels, and a clown band riding atop another Bandwagon. Finally the elephants shuffled by, "tailing" by holding on with their trunks to the tail of the animal ahead. This kept them in reasonable line, and also kept their curious trunks out of mischief. A hundred yards ahead of the ponderous pachyderms were two riders, one on each side of the parade route, who kept calling, "Hold your horses, the elephants are coming!" This was necessary, as the pungent aroma of elephant could cause horses to bolt. Thus the origin of the term, "hold your horses."



Early circus parade down State Street, 1887 David Bisol



Antique ticket wagon restored by the author, built c. 1915 Harold G. Davidson

Finally, the earsplitting, raucous steam calliope, which always came at the end of the parade. Belching smoke and steam, its "music" could be heard for miles — which was exactly the purpose of the device. A horde of children would follow the calliope back to the circus lot.

The parade route in Santa Barbara varied, but usually followed a general pattern. Leaving the lot, it went up Haley Street, crossed State to either Chapala or De La Vina where it turned right. The procession then went to either Victoria or Sola Street, turned right to State Street, and then right again as it proceeded down State and back to the circus grounds. Many years ago, the parades might start, and return along Montecito Street, but when the rerouting of U.S. Highway 101 bisected that street, the circuses would use alternate routes to get to and from the downtown area of Santa Barbara.

By the time the parade arrived back on the lot, the third train section was being unloaded at the runs. It carried the contents of the Big Top; seats, rings, lights and performers' riggings and what was called "lead stock," that is, any animals which were led to the lot by their handlers. These included ring stock (performing horses and ponies), zebras, etc. The fourth section of the train had arrived earlier before "parade call," and had been pulled into a siding, and consisted of performers and management personnel in Pullmans. The entire circus had arrived in Santa Barbara, but if you wanted to make a circus official see "red," you might remark that you know they brought only half the circus to a small town like Santa Barbara; only the big cities saw the entire circus. Circus men knew that it was impossible to have two of everything, but they generally ignored the towners who were "in the know."

The Afternoon Performance

At 1:00 P.M. came the cry "doors," which was a signal that the Main Entrance was open for inspection of the menagerie one hour before the matinee performance began. This was also a cue for the Side Show band to start the afternoon with a lively circus tune, and the "talkers" would commence to lure customers into the world of freaks, two-headed cows, snake charmers, fire-eaters, sword-swallowers, and the fat lady, and the spider man. All for 25¢!

The "grease joints" opened for business (hamburger stands to you!), and the tantalizing smell of frying meat and onions assailed your nostrils. Cotton candy and balloons appeared, and regardless of your worldly attitude, "See one circus and you've seen them all," you really were powerless, gripped by a once-or-twice a year trance, and simply swept along in the swirling, milling crowd lined up at the Ticket Wagons.

There was a deliberate method in the apparent madness of the circus, the way the available space gradually narrowed until you reached the Front Door, handed over your ticket, and passed through one of the four turnstiles to be greeted by a huge, friendly sign which read "EVERYONE MUST HAVE A TICKET." By compressing the crowd through a narrow funnel at the entrance, it always gave the appearance of an anxious multitude that could hardly wait until they got to their seats before they were all gone. It worked every time . . . .

Once inside, your nose was again assaulted, this time by a smell which

cannot be described. An enormous canvas menagerie tent on a hot day, filled with people, elephants, camels, zebras, llamas, a hippopotamus, and scores of exotic jungle cats in their cages, has a smell all its own. No matter, you purchased peanuts for the elephants who, if you did not keep pumping peanuts into their flaring snouts, would simply reach into your pocket and filch you bag of goobers.

At this time, one of the Great Deceptions of childhood should be mentioned. Father took the day off from work in order to take his children to see the circus. An admirable deed, worthy of any parent. In truth, Daddy wanted to go to the circus to re-live his childhood for a few magic hours, and his children were really taking *him*. Mother pretended not to catch on, but she and the children knew what Dad was up to.

Big Top Activities

Leaving the menagerie, the customers streamed into the Big Top, where an ancient circus ritual, known as the "warm-up" was in progress. Clowns greeted customers with various routines. A tramp would present a young lady with a flower, then walk away (with the flower) before she discovered she was left holding a small, cardboard tube. One famous clown had a grubby notebook, and the stub of a pencil and would attempt to seat patrons in the reserve seat section according to a list he claimed to have, but which always resulted in utter chaos.

An equally famous clown would enter the tent with a broom before the show started, and proceed to sweep the various ropes and equipment, and flick imaginary flecks of dust from the chair seats. Corny you say? Yes, but it was a special, bright brand of alchemy that worked. By the time the audience was seated, they were usually roaring with laughter, and it was capped by a clown rushing in at the last moment, attempting to deliver a block of ice to some unwary customer.

A whistle blew, a canvas entrance curtain was swept aside, the circus band blared a fanfare, and the Grand Inaugural Spectacle entered and paraded around the Hippodrome Track. The entire traditional performance of two hours and twenty minutes was cued by the circus band, whose leader directed while watching the start and finish of each act. The band members were professionals who played performances totaling nearly five hours a day, in addition to rehearsals. There was bull music for the elephants, waltz music for the flyers on the trapeze, acrobats, wild animal acts and clowns.

During July and August, children would have no problem attending the circus, but while school was in during April, May, June and September, it was a different story. The city schools Superintendent of each city where the circus played, usually let the children out to see the parade and to attend the circus.

After the matinee performance, the crowd filed out of the Big Top, made a last-minute inspection of the menagerie, and was subjected to a last-ditch effort by the pitchmen to buy balloons, pennants, cotton candy and stuffed animals. The performers relaxed, read books, wrote letters, washed their clothes, and had a leisurely dinner at the cooktent.

The doors were again opened at 7 P.M., one hour ahead of the opening

"spec" at 8. The afternoon's "warm-up" was repeated, and by the time the last straggler was seated for the evening show, the "tear-down" had begun.

The Circus Dismantled

The cookhouse tent was the first to be taken down and loaded into its wagons. While still daylight, they were driven to the runs and hauled up onto the flats by a pull-up team. It was followed shortly after by the menagerie tent, and the caged animals, after they had completed their performance in the steel arena under the darkening Big Top.

The enchanting evening show continued to the strains of the band, and when the last act was over, the traditional circus cry of "all over and out" was heard, and on each side of the hippodrome track, an elephant pulling a red seat wagon, hurried the exit of the audience out of the tent into the dark night. By now, everything except the Big Top and its contents had been loaded on the flats back at the runs, and when the last "lot louse" was still gaping, the teardown was almost completed.

Everybody, from circus executives to the candy butchers, hurled themselves into the ordeal of dismantling and loading the circus. The seats were taken down and loaded, lights, apparatus and riggings were lowered and stored away into waiting wagons. There was a sense of urgency, which was not related to wages, salary, or monetary gain. It was Pride!

When the huge canvas tent was empty and silent, the voice of the canvasboss was heard, "let 'er go," and the canvas fell and was pushed to the ground by the waiting canvas crew, who rushed to the center poles and unlaced each segment of canvas, rolled it up and heaved it into a waiting canvas wagon.

The road from the darkened lot to the waiting runs was lit by a string of round kerosene flares. Wagons, animals and men streamed back to what was now the third and fourth sections of the circus train. The Flying Squadron and the second section was already on their way to tomorrow's lot.

The last wagon was hauled up the runs onto a flatcar, the metal ramps were lifted onto the car, wooden blocks placed under the wheels of all rolling stock on the flats, and then chained down. The train boss gave the word, a trainman signalled the highball, and the circus was on its way to the next city, lot and date.

As Ernest Hemingway stated, "The circus is the only Ageless Delight which can be bought with money."

* * *

The above account is historically and factually true, but the author wishes to make clear that this article is not a definitive history of the circus in Santa Barbara. Such a work would entail a year of research and writing. This acount only attempts to record events of the past before they are forgotten forever. The material is limited to the era of the railroad circuses and does not recount the earlier visits of Spanish and Gypsy troupes, or the much later engagements of the motorized circus.

There were many circus grounds in Santa Barbara, starting with the Estero

racetrack on the Lower East side, where small circuses were set up on the track's infield (weather permitting). Later, lots were located at Olive and Haley Streets, and also near the corner of Haley and Quarantina Streets, but eventually the circuses used what was known as the Southern Pacific circus grounds, the pie-shaped piece of land between the present U.S. Highway 101 and the S.P. mainline tracks.

"Sic transit gloria mundi." The old circus lot is now the site of Santa Barbara's new city sewage treatment plant.



Tents set up similar to Santa Barbara scene — Harold G. Davidson

A partial list of the circus "railers" that played Santa Barbara between 1886 and 1956:

1886 — March 15. Van Amberg's Railroad Circus (sic). "The circus tent at the evening performance yesterday was literally packed, and a very good acrobatic performance was given. This morning the circus band was out again and the free open air performance was repeated. A matinee performance was commencing at half past one and will be concluded in time to allow the packing of the tent and the properties so as to take the Orizaba for San Diego, where the troupe next appears." *The Daily Press*, Santa Barbara, March 16, 1886.

1887 — Oct. 3. Old John Robinson's Circus. Ten Big Shows in One. This was probably the first railer into Santa Barbara, and the *Morning Press* reported Oct. 4: "Old John Robinsons' big circus arrived on its own train of sixty cars on Sunday night, and early yesterday morning, the cars were drawn up to State Street where the wagons, horses, tents and paraphernalia wre unpacked and moved *down to the lot at the foot of State street*, where the show was to be given. A small army of men went to work and in a few hours time a city of canvas sprung up *below the old beach house*. (The italics are the author's) . . . the street parade moved out State street to Haley, out Haley to Chapala, to the Arlington, and back down State street to the circus grounds . . . . From early morning, country people continued to arrive in town, and seldom has the city presented a more animated appearance. The hotels were all full of people, and the restaurants had a busy time feeding all the hungry crowd."

1896 — Sept. 21. Forepaugh-Sells Circus.

1899 — Oct. 21. "The first automobile wagon appeared in the great circus procession this morning."

1900—Oct. 8. Ringling Bros. Circus. Lot was "inside the race track." Reserved numbered seats and admission show-day at White House Clothing Store, 701 State Street.

1901—Sept. 12. Ringling Brothers. Circus day ticket office "Santa Fe Ticket Office, 731½ State Street."

1901—Buffalo Bill's Wild West.

1903—Buffalo Bill's Wild West.

1904—Sept. 20. Ringling Bros. Circus. Lot "located in the vicinity of the Estero grounds north of the race track and freight depot."

1905—Sept. 23. Barnum and Bailey Circus. Lot "old race track." Downtown ticket office "Red Cross Drug Co.," 828 State Street.

1914—April 16. Sells-Floto Circus & Buffalo Bill Himself. Circus day ticket office "Red Cross Drug Co."

1915—April 23. Sells-Floto Circus & Buffalo Bill Himself. Cody's last year on this circus, and probably his last year in show business. Feature of this year's show was a merry-go-round, a unique feature with a circus, but a real money-maker.

1917—Nov. 18. Al G. Barnes Circus.

1918—May 7. Sells-Floto Circus. The show was kept west of the Mississippi River away from the Eastern railroads that were involved with wartime traffic. The resulting delays in schedules had convinced the management of Sells-Floto that they should stay in the west until the war was over.

1920—Nov. 17. Al G. Barnes Circus.

1921—April 16. The Howes Great London Circus and Van Amburg's Trained Wild Animals (sic).

1921—Sept. Sells-Floto Circus.

1921—Nov. Al G. Barnes Circus.

1923—Oct. Al G. Barnes Circus.

1924—Oct. Al G. Barnes Circus.

As it can be seen from the above dates, the Al G. Barnes Circus, with its winter quarters at Baldwin Park, California, practically "owned" the Santa Barbara circus scene. Later, as it will be seen, the Clyde Beatty Circus was in the same position during the late 1940's until mid 1950's.

1925—Sept. 11. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined shows. Lot "Salsipuedes and Montecito Streets." Circus day ticket office at "Diehl's," 825 State Street.

1926—Sept. Sells-Floto Circus.

1927—Sept. 7. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows.

1928—Al G. Barnes Circus.

1929—Aug. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows.

1930—May. Cole Brothers Circus.

1931—Sept. 2. Sells-Floto Circus with Tom Mix and his horse Tony in person.

1934—Sept. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows.

1936—April 17. Al G. Barnes Wild Animal Circus, featuring Bert Nelson and his lions and tigers.

1937—April 10. Al G. Barnes and Sells-Floto Combined Circus, featuring "Lotus, the only blood-sweating hippopotamus in captivity." (For the sake of posterity, when Lotus came to the author's home town of Winnipeg, Canada, I touched her tough hide—no blood, just sweat.)

1937—Sept. 17. Cole Bros.-Clyde Beaty Circus.

1938—Sept. 14. Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus. This show went "broke" at Riverside, California, a few days after leaving Santa Barbara.

1939—Sept. 12. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows. Downtown ticket office at Owl Drug Co., 1101 State St.

1944—March 14. Clyde Beatty and Russell Bros. Circus.

1946—May 15. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1946—Sept. 24. Cristiani Bros. Circus. The circus ringmaster announced that "Santa Barbara, because of its unusual climatic conditions, is the ONLY spot in the whole United States where an elephant sweats."

1947—April. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1948—April. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1948—Sept. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows.

1949—May. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1950—May. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1951—May. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1951—Sept. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows.

1952—May. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1953—May. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1954—May. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1955—May. Clyde Beatty Circus.

1956—May 10. Declining revenues and a labor dispute closed the Clyde Beatty Circus, and it returned to its winter quarters at Deming, N.M. The show had dates in Oxnard and Santa Barbara, but they were cancelled. Thus ended the era of the railroad circus in Santa Barbara.

* * *

Persons interested in further research can find a large collection of circus books at the Santa Barbara City College Library.

* * *

Acknowledgements

David Bisol, Harry Goux, J. Ray Lathim, Paramount Pictures Corporation, Robert L. Parkinson, Circus World Museum, Ken Poley, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, *Santa Barbara News-Press*, Virginia Rose Smith, Fred H. Warde.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Keep in mind the annual meeting of the Santa Barbara Historical Society in the Covarrubias Adobe Thursday, January 19, 1984.

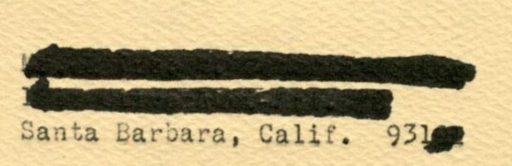
A reception honoring outgoing officers and board members will be held in the Carrillo Room of the Historical Museum following the meeting.

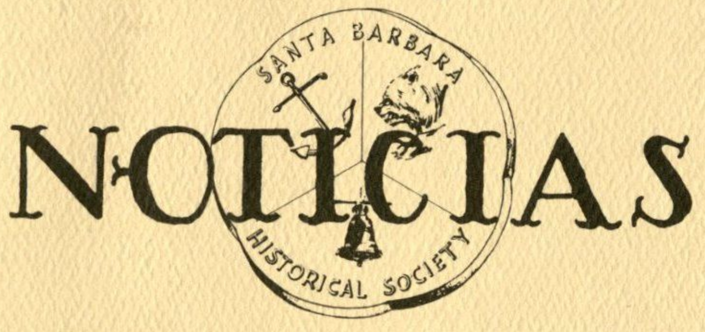
LIBRO DE RECUERDOS

During 1983 many persons were honored at the Santa Barbara Historical Society Museum by memorial gifts from friends and relatives, entitling them to listing in the *LIBRO DE RECUERDOS* the beautiful leather-bound volume in the Spanish Room. The Society invites you to remember your loved ones in this special way.

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
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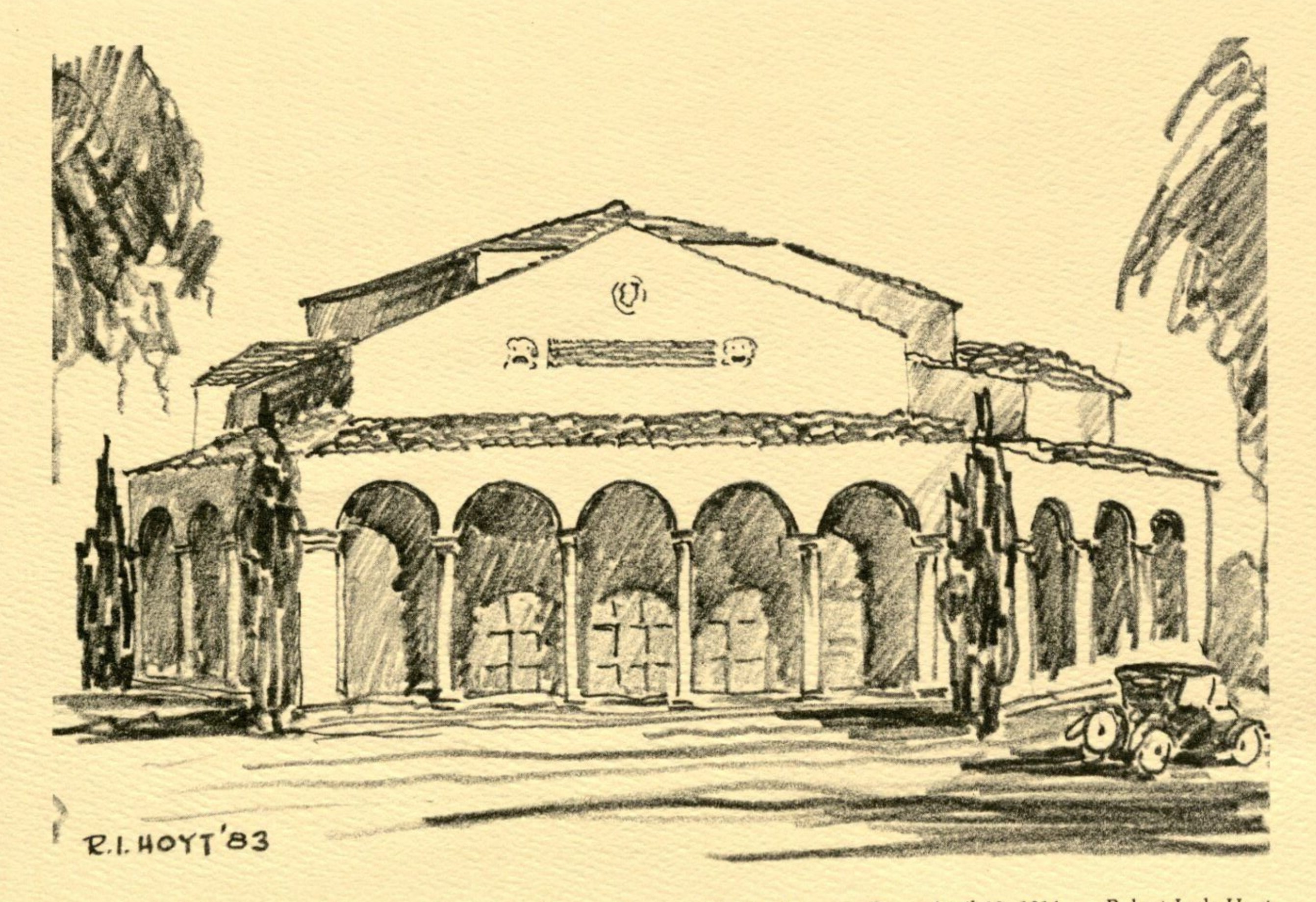
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Santa Cruz Island Chapel, Main Ranch, when a Mission was conducted by the Rev. Jenna, S. J., 1893. From a glass plate taken by Arthur J. Caire. Note the vineyard. Helen Caire

Vol. XXIX, No.4 Winter, 1983



Mrs. William Miller Graham's Country Play House from a photograph in the Morning Press, April 19, 1914 Robert Ingle Hoyt

See page 74 (Outdoor Theatres)

CHRISTMAS AT THE ISLAND

By Helen Caire*

It was coming true at last—our dream of Christmas at the Island. Our sojourns were always during summer vacations, sometimes in the fall or spring. But this was to be in winter at Christmastime!

Several weeks before the day, there were countless confabulations as preparations got under way. Of course, the Christmas tree would be a pine—not the Santa Cruz Island Pine,[1] the remnant of an ancient era. A close kin of the Torrey Pine, it has disappeared from elsewhere in the world. With branches thrust out irregularly, its outline has a rugged look, as though daring the centuries to uproot it. These primeval pines would reject being trimmed; but its forest fellow, the Bishop Pine, full and symmetrical, would lend itself well to garlands and ornaments.

Early one morning my cousin Justinian set out with a workman for the Pinos Chicos, the forest that marches northwestward from Prisoners' Harbor to Pelican Bay; beyond, stretch the Pinos Grandes.

The Santa Cruz Christmas Tree

Hours later, the old Ford rumbled over the bridge, and when it came to a halt before the side gate of the residence enclosure, we rallied around it with cries of mock-surprise: "Santa Claus! How did you find us here 'way out in the Channel?" and "How did your reindeer turn into a tin Lizzie?" Laughing cheers greeted a full-branched pine when it was unloaded and carried into the house.

Hercules Pico, the regular cook, was on vacation in Santa Barbara, so the temporary cook importantly left his pots and skillets for an afternoon — though his feet "hurt somethin' terrible" — to make a stand for it: a wooden box painted bright green. The rough trunk fitted perfectly into the round hole at the top. Centered before the view window of the living room, the pine stood proudly in its aromatic green.

We looked at it and then at each other with quizzical expressions — the thought in each mind: a fine thing, a beautiful thing as it was. Why trim it? Youthful intolerance, laced with a fillip of Gallic bias, prompted some mutterings of "What a Teutonic notion! to decorate a tree — ." Finally, someone suggested, "Oh, come on. It's a Christmas custom we've always had. Let's go ahead!" So untimely prejudice was quashed.

Not having brought the usual decorations from home, we set out in search of ornaments. The clear, brittle air of winter nipped at our warm sweaters and jeans in spite of the sparkling sunshine. My sister Marie, always ingenious in improvising and fashioning things, was bubbling with ideas. From tall eucalyptus trees we picked blue-gray "bells" to be gilded and strung into garlands. Even now, years later, they still retain their aromatic scent. Others we covered with colored foil — red, silver, green, yellow — and tied them in clusters. Still others we fashioned into shining bells of bright glazed paper. Marie painted oak tree "balls" with white lead and sprinkled them with pastel-colored crystals. We gilded the tight brown cones growing on several

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*Helen Caire is the granddaughter of Justinian Caire, early owner of Santa Cruz Island. With her family and friends she used to spend happy summer and other vacations at the Island. Some of her interests are opera, travel, writing, and especially California history.

[1] Pinus Remorata Mason

branches of the tree — "built-in" ornaments which the pine itself furnished.

The weather, clear but cold, made particularly welcome a big wood fire, crackling and snapping in the hearth, sending up clean, good-smelling flames every evening. When the fire was low, we sprinkled kernels in the old wire basket of the corn popper and snapped the cover tightly. Soon the sudden, surprised hop of the yellow kernels fluffed out in the wire basket and the smell of popcorn permeated the warm room. Later, there was the buttered batch to munch from a handy bowl while we threaded the popcorn on long strings.

My cousin Lucile emerged one day from secret sessions in her room, holding up the head of old Santa Claus himself. She had drawn the outline on cardboard. For Santa's red coat and cap she fastened Toyon berries; for eyes she chose black seeds from the ligustrum hedge behind the patio, and for a luxuriant beard, popcorn billowed over the lower half of his face. He had a merry look as he topped the tree.

The cook was brought in to admire, and Juan, the saddle maker, too. It was the first Christmas tree on the Island—really a tree of love and happy labor.

Now mid-morning or mid-afternoon, the kitchen was redolent of the scent of spices, chocolate, pinenuts, citron and other savory ingredients that escaped the oven to announce that the Christmas cake was baking. My mother had a super culinary gift; under her direction the Christmas feast was sure to be a gourmet's delight.

Several days before Christmas some of us rode, some drove down to La Playa (Prisoners' Harbor) to greet Father Thomas Sherman, who was to be our guest. We were pleased that he had promised to celebrate the three Masses of Christmas. When the schooner "Santa Cruz" came alongside, my father stepped nimbly onto the wharf with the white-bearded padre. He somewhat resembled his father, General William Tecumseh Sherman. The black hat and long black coat looked rather incongruous with his khaki outfit and doeskin leggings which an Indian had made for him. He was most affable and very interested in the Island, so we all arrived at the Main Ranch in high spirits.

Father Thomas Sherman

Father Tom, a highly individualistic person with definite tastes and ideas, was a most agreeable guest. He was a good conversationalist and had a store of interesting anecdotes to relate. One day at dinner in the long dining room, we asked him about the truth of the Sherman rose story.

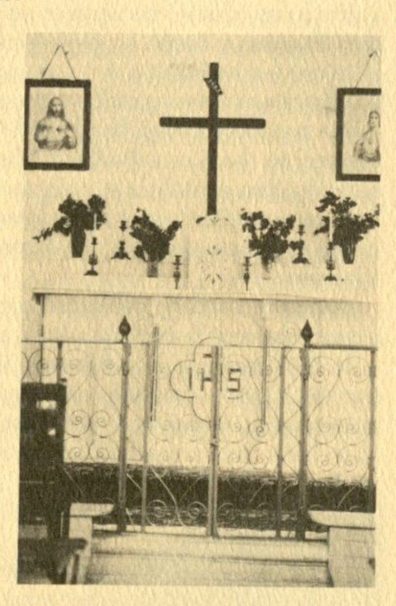
He gave a characteristic "Pshaw!" Of course General Sherman had met Señorita Maria Ignacia Bonifacio in Monterey, and there was a rosebush climbing on the porch of the house. But there never was a romantic attachment. General Sherman did return to Monterey years later and had a very pleasant visit with the gracious Spanish lady. So the bright flame of truth burnt up the golden straw of a charming but fictitious legend of old California. There is now a bank on the site of the Bonifacio adobe house in downtown Monterey with a plaque commemorating the Sherman rose legend.

In the evening we brought out the cribbage board, used by a former generation of the family, for Father Tom enjoyed the game. My mother played

cribbage with the padre, while we chattered, popped corn, played cards or other games, wrote letters, or if it happened to be "schooner day," read the several newspapers which had arrived from Santa Barbara. Kerosene lamps lighted the room, a large one with a painted glass shade on the center table. When our games became too exuberant or a sudden draft blew across the lamp chimneys from an open door, there were cries of "Look out for the lamp!" — especially from the older generation. Everyone joined in practicing Christmas carols, for Father Tom insisted that we must be the choir. The candles in brackets on either side of the music book were lighted, as Lulu sat down to play on the yellowed keys of the little rosewood piano. It had come from France around the Horn long ago, and seemed to have a peculiar sound of sweetness and age. My father's *bel canto* tenor led us in "*Minuit Chrétien. . .*" and other carols.



The Rev. Thomas Sherman, S. J., on arrival at the island Helen Caire



Interior of chapel at Main Ranch Helen Caire

The Chapel on Santa Cruz

Now the chapel absorbed our attention. Instead of the early Franciscan mission that might have been, my grandfather, Justinian Caire, had the chapel built in 1891 in the style of the one at his family's summer home in the Alps of Dauphiny. Built of bricks, molded from island earth and fired at the Main Ranch, the little building was squared by stone blocks at the four corners from ground to roof. A cross was carved by an expert Italian stone mason in each quoin. The sturdy red brick chapel with its brown belfry, close to a hillslope of the northern range, almost surrounded by the glistening green of the vineyard, presented a tranquil scene. Calls of meadow larks and mourning doves deepened the ambiance of serenity. But now in December the

green leaves had turned to scarlet and gold and finally withered in season. The vine trunks stood out gnarled and thick above the plowed earth.

A detour down a trail of the past is relevant here with regard to plans for a mission at the island, referred to above. As early as 1770 the Franciscan padres had thought of building a mission on the island.[1] In 1804 Father Tapis broached the subject to Arrillaga, the governor of California, who approved, particularly as an aid in putting a stop to contraband. Many foreigners were smuggling goods, especially sea otter fur, as the names of Smugglers' Coves at Santa Cruz and at San Clemente Islands attest. Since the padres wished to convert the Island Indians, and the Spanish government wished to halt smuggling, an island mission was planned. The Chumash from neighboring Santa Rosa Island were willing to move to Santa Cruz, but would not consent to go to the mainland to beautiful Santa Barbara Mission.

However, chiefly because of an epidemic of measles which raged through the Chumash villages on both islands, the populations were so reduced that all plans for building a mission on the island were abandoned. Instead, the few survivors were brought to the mainland, probably to Mission Santa Ynez.

We wondered why the Island Chumash had not been taken across the channel to the Santa Barbara Mission. Finally we decided that the padres, realizing that nostalgia in daily seeing their islands swimming on the channel horizon would be too much to bear, transported them inland behind the coast range. Good psychology, we agreed, for we could sympathize with the native islanders.

So in place of the projected early nineteenth century mission, there was a late nineteenth century island chapel.

In 1893 Justinian and Albina Caire planned to have a mission in the chapel for the Island workmen, since going to the mainland to attend Mass was not possible. It was not, of course, such a mission as the Franciscans would have built, but a course of sermons and services in the chapel for reviving faith and zeal. Father Genna, S. J., a friend of my grandparents, conducted the mission to which the employes, chiefly Californios and Italians, responded well.

So much for the detour wandering into the past, and time to return to our twentieth century Christmas at the Island.

The Search for "Toyons"

A few days before Christmas we rode over the trails in the hills, armed with shears to find Toyon berries for the chapel, huge crimson clusters for the Bambino's house on His Birthday. Father Tom exchanged his black hat for the straight-brimmed khaki-colored one he had worn as a chaplain in the cavalry. He was not at all disconcerted by the steep, narrow trails in the chaparral of the Colorados, the rolling red range forming the southern boundary of the *Cañada del Medio*, the central valley where the Main Ranch lies.

The largest, brightest Toyon berries ripen on the southern slopes of the range. We tied crimson bunches on both sides of the saddle horns, the clusters

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[1] Hubert Howe Bancroft. History of California, III (Annals of territorial California, 1825-1840) 33-34. Zephyrin Engelhardt. The Missions and Missionaries of California, III, 235-54.

of berries reaching over the shoulders of our horses. They objected somewhat, but not disastrously. Then our cavalcade of six or seven returned with jingling bridles and bright red berries to the high-arched entrance of the stable.

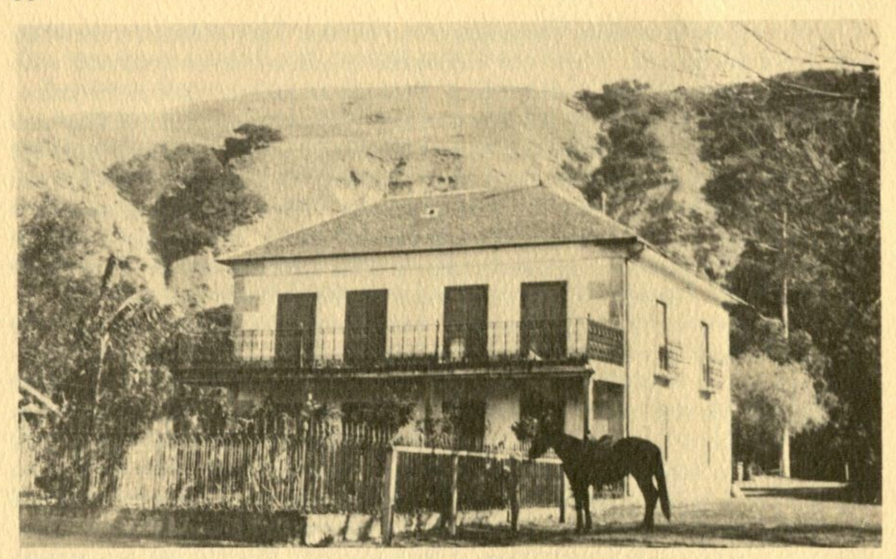
What a good place the red brick stable was with its smell of hay and harnesses and horses! How clean were the tarred cobbles between the swept planks of the stalls lined on either side! The arch at the farther end opened on a corral almost bisected by a long manger. The hay chute sloped to it from the loft, our best slide when we were children. We always liked the stable. Now it reminded us vividly that in a far land the Christ Child chose to be born in a stable, the humble place of the animals that serve us.

Abelino, the stableman, especially took pride in keeping it in order. He had been at the Island when my young mother and aunts rode on side saddles and wore wide divided skirts. We could not remember any other stableman. He was not at the Island this December. Rheumatism kept him on the mainland, wistfully looking across the channel. So it was Juan, slight and squinting behind his readymade glasses, who came from the tack room which was called the saddle shop, probably because Juan was a professional saddle maker. He more than willingly left the high seat to his work table, facing a window with a wide view of the barnyard. The *paisano* was a chatty person with an eager "What's doing?" personality. He admired the berries and made other chat as he took our horses.

On our second trip we took the more efficient, if less interesting method for carting Toyons — the Model T Ford. Justy cranked it up for us and stepped nimbly aside, waving us off elaborately with his *sombrero*, as with a jerk, we started up, rattling down the almost three-mile road in the *Cañada del Puerto* to Prisoners' Harbor. There Rafael, newly from Mexico — the regular employe at La Playa must have been on vacation — emerged from the barnyard across the creek. Trailing him along the bridge was a procession of dog, chickens, piglet, and calf.



Riding down to *Cañada del Puerto* Helen Caire



House at Prisoners' Harbor — Helen Caire

Greeting us with his sweet, childlike smile, he enthusiastically helped to pick more berries *"por el altar por la Navidad."* We climbed the zigzag trail up the steep slope to the look-out house, used to spy the mast of the sailboat "Star of Freedom" through a telescope before the "Santa Cruz" was built. Not far beyond the small building of weathered wood we found generous trees with heavy clusters on the edge of the chapparal.

When we came down, we entered the garden surrounded by a wrought-iron picket fence in front of the two-story adobe house. We paused to look up at it; it was so charming with green shutters on French doors leading to wrought-iron railed balconies. Poinsettias, flaming in a corner of the garden, had been saved for this feast day, and we took the best blooms. Rafael helped us load our floral cargo into the Ford. While we bumped and rattled on the creek-bed road up to the Main Ranch, we carefully protected our bouquets to keep them from being bruised or broken.

The Santa Cruz Island Chapel

On Christmas Eve, having ransacked the ranch for vases, we decorated the chapel, opening the double doors with a wonderfully long French key. Father Tom had appointed Jeanne sacristan. On the simple altar she laid the smooth linen cloth. Between branched candlesticks, poinsettias and berries flamed in their vases and on the deep sills under the four ogival windows.

Back at the house in the living room we rigged up a confessional with a screen and a footstool for a kneeler, and on the other side, a chair for Father Tom and a table with a candle, casting a shadowy light. Now we were ready for the day.

Berry clusters on both sides of the mantel and on the center table, the fresh green pine, and firelight glowing on the old-fashioned frames of chairs and high-backed sofa radiated an ambiance of warmth and festivity.

Christmas morning dawned crisp and clear. We shivered as we donned "city clothes" and pulled on our riding boots to keep our legs warm, laughing as we looked at each other in our semi-urban, demi-ranch costumes. Singing carols, we set out for the chapel, two big puppies scampering after us, through the peach orchard, over the bridge, and over the plowed earth of the vineyard. "The first Noel, the angels did say. . . " and " *Gloria in excelsis Deo. . .* " The words of the age-old carols streamed over the fields, over the fertile clods and gnarled vine trunks, while from the littly belfry resounded the sweet, mellow pealing of the chapel bell.

We entered under the Gothic arch of the doorway. Early light touched the windows in slanting paths of amber, rose and blue. Beyond the wrought-iron sanctuary railing, forged long ago in the Island smithy, the altar candles blazed in tongues of light; the flowers bloomed for their God.

The Island Christmas Masses

The chapel was filled. Father Tom, at the altar in white vestments, began the first Mass. It did not detract from the solemnity that his doeskin leggings showed below the alb. Justy, acting as acolyte, looked even taller in his Western boots.



The Rev. Thomas Sherman, S. J., Christmas Day
Helen Caire

There knelt my father, his shoulders neat and straight, my pretty mother beside him, my sisters and cousins. The ranch hands had filed in, and remained for the three Masses — all of us kneeling before the Mystery of the Birth. Rafael had been driven up from La Playa for the Masses. He wore a white panama hat. Winter or not, this was his best hat to be worn on great occasions.

"*Adeste Fideles. . .*" — "Holy Night, Silent Night. . ." The Host was raised before the lights and bright blooms, the Mystery of the Death celebrating the Mystery of the Birth. The second and third Masses followed. The very air of the little chapel was filled with sacred beauty.

At one point our puppy companions which had been barred entrance, pushed in their heads at the door and were swiftly banished. But when we came out, leaving the chapel with its sweet scent of snuffed candles, Bully Boy with the sad eyes and head of a mastiff, and fat, brindle Donnie, sons of old Don, yelped and romped happily.

We returned to the house, our boots avoiding the clods of the dormant earth, and chattered of the gala feast to follow, with roasted wild geese, plump from the grainfields of Christy Ranch at the west end, and other tasty dishes, good wine heightening flavor and enjoyment—all finally capped with our traditional Christmas cake.

First the Feast of God, then the feast of men: This was Christmas at the Island.



Jeanne Caire and wild geese for Christmas dinner, Main Ranch
Helen Caire

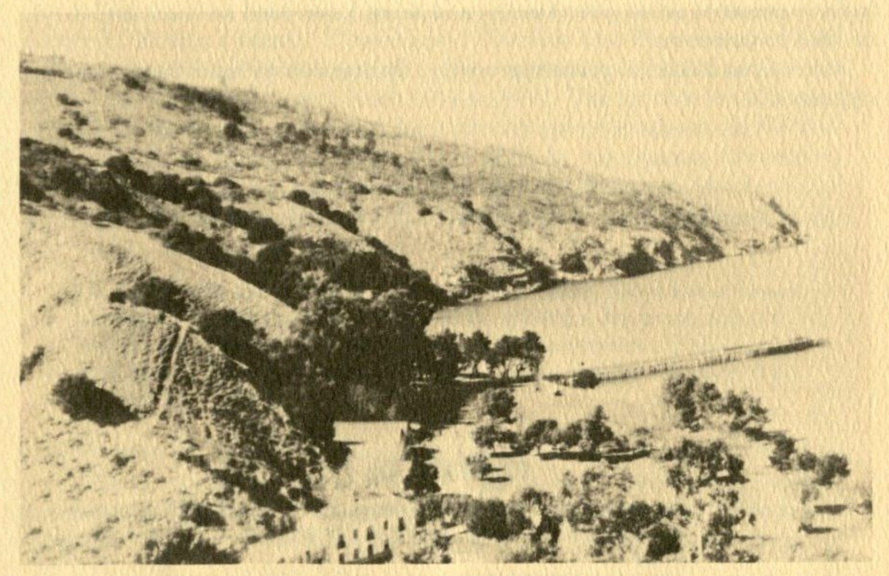
A BRIEF HISTORY OF SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

By Helen Caire*

The Chumash Indians were the first inhabitants of the island they called Limú, which lies twenty-five miles due south of Santa Barbara.[1] For several millennia this coastal people lived in their villages on the 60,000-acre island.

In 1542 Juan Rodrígues Cabrillo discovered California for the Western World and took possession in the name of the Spanish crown.[2] Under the command of Sebastián Viscaíno, the next explorers charted the coast and named the Santa Barbara Channel.[3] More than a century and a half passed before the Island Chumash again saw the square-sails of Spanish ships billowing in the channel wind. The first land made by this expedition on their journey from Mexico in 1769 was Limú. The explorers, led by Juan Perez, landed and named the island Santa Cruz.[4]

The Chumash Indians no longer inhabited the island in 1830 when thirty-one prisoners were sent there by the Mexican government.[5] The main port of the island is called Prisoners' Harbor after them. Remaining only from April to November, the prisoners escaped to the mainland on a raft.



Prisoners' Harbor — Helen Caire

In 1839 the President of Mexico authorized a special grant of Santa Cruz Island to Andrés Castillero. Whether this Spanish gentleman ever set foot on the island is unknown. He sold it to Eustace Barron and his associates, title being taken in 1859 in the name of William E. Barron, nephew of Eustace. They started ranching operations, stocking the island with fine sheep.

"In 1869, ten San Franciscans — directors of the local French savings bank, including Justinian Caire — filed articles of incorporation for The Santa Cruz Island Company, which acquired the island as a basis for livestock opera-

*For Santa Barbarans who may not be familiar with THE Island's history, Miss Caire has prepared this brief, accurate survey.

tions. In the course of the next dozen years, Justinian Caire purchased from the other shareholders the entire capital stock of the corporation, all of which before his death [1897] he transferred to his beloved wife. After he became sole owner, he undertook a program of construction and development of the island. . ."[6] He carried on diversified ranching operations — sheep, cattle, and vineyards — continued by his son, Frederic F. Caire, and his grandson, Justinian Caire II. As a result of a partition suit in 1925, The National Trading Company became owners of about 6,000 acres at the east end.

The Santa Cruz Island Company continued ranching operations until 1937, when they sold their holdings of about 54,000 acres to Edwin and Evelyn Stanton. Now their son, Carey Stanton, controls all the stock of The Santa Cruz Island Company "either by ownership or by guaranteed proxy. Twelve thousand acres on the north side were sold to The Nature Conservancy for fund raising purposes only, and immediately leased back for the taxes to the Company. The Nature Conservancy has nothing here but good will, but will get all the stock in their own name in AD2008. I felt and feel that it is a fine way to preserve what your family and mine have tried so hard and done so well to preserve."[7]

Santa Cruz Island is private property. Permission to land there must be requested.

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6. Excerpt from a letter dated Dec. 5, 1961, addressed to Joann Roe by L.A. Jeanne Caire.
7. Excerpt from a letter dated Dec. 5, 1982, addressed to Helen Caire by Carey Stanton.

PRIVATE OUTDOOR THEATRES IN MONTECITO

By Patricia Gardner Cleek*

In the teens of the present century there was a revival of theatre in the open air in America due to the interest in experimenting with different modes of theatre as well as due to the belief in the healthfulness of human activities out-of-doors. As a result, there was a burgeoning of festivals and pageants in the eastern United States as well as in California. Although there were quite a few on the West Coast by the middle of the 1920s, a writer in *Architect and Engineer* was of the opinion that here could be even more private and public outdoor theatres. He suggested sites with "rolling topography" around San Francisco, Monterey and Santa Cruz, as well as here in Santa Barbara.

Due to this popular interest, five wealthy people in Montecito constructed private theatres in the middle and late teens. Three of them were of the Italian garden type. This may have been because many wealthy Americans at the turn of the century were going to Italy and buying old villas and restoring the pleasure gardens.

The Bothins' Theatre

One of the earliest and finest garden theatres in Montecito was located at Henry E. Bothin's estate, "Piranhurst." The San Francisco industrialist's mansion following the lines of early Italian renaissance took three years to complete during the war years from 1914 to 1917. The garden theatre must have been finished at the same time, for a photograph of it appears in Sheldon Cheney's book on *Open-Air Theatres* of 1918. In his chapter devoted to "Garden Theatre," Cheney extolled the Bothins' little theatre as "the American theatre that approaches closest to the Italian types," using "clipped hedge wings"—the "teatro di verdura."

> It is clearly inspired by that at Villa Gori (near Siena, Italy) and achieves something of the same purity and simplicity of design. An unusual feature is the half circle of enclosed "boxes" around the auditorium. There are six in number each holding nine people. On the auditorium floor there is room for one hundred spectators.[1]

Cheney went on to say that there was another similar theatre inspired by the Villa Gori on an estate in Lake Forest, Illinois, but it had been remodeled and substantially changed. Thus the Bothins' out-door stage remained a unique jewel. It was often admired by visitors to the estate, but there are no records that it was ever used.

The Armour-Mitchells' Outdoor Theatre

Another outdoor theatre close by in Montecito could be found at Lolita Armour-Mitchell's "El Mirador," an estate she purchased in 1916. She brought out Arthur Heun, a Chicago architect, who had built her family's house in Lake Forest, Illinois, to design the buildings. One wonders who planned the Italian garden in Rennaissance style featuring cypress vistas, stairways of water and formal plantings? Elmer Awl, whose skill in landscaping kept him as the superintendant of grounds at "El Mirador" for many years, helped supervise the construction of the theatre.

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*Mrs. Cleek has been a resident of Santa Barbara for sixteen years. She has been a docent of the Santa Barbara Historical Society for ten years, and now is occupied with the Society's Oral History program. She has also served on the Montecito History Association committee.

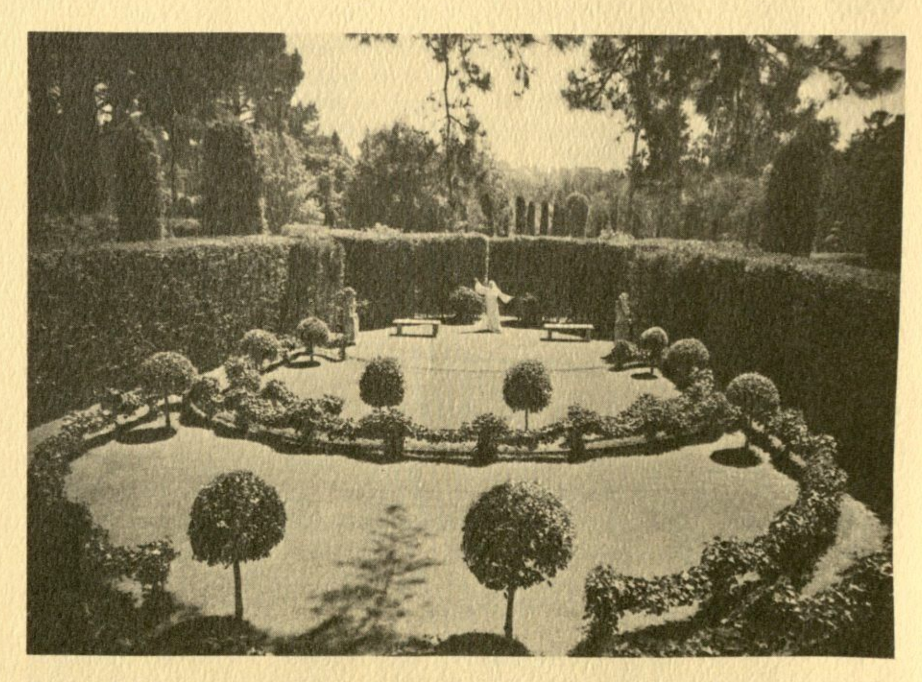
> The outdoor theatre on a steep side of the canyon surrounded by native trees and shrubs, is another feature [of the garden], but seldom seen by visitors, who in the past have been so hospitably admitted to the grounds by the owner, Mrs. John J. Mitchell.
>
> The little theatre, outlined in dark cypress hedges and the walk along the canyon that leads from it, are features in interesting contrast with the forecourt and terrace in the estate of Mrs. Henry Bothin.[2]

According to Mr. Awl, the garden theatre was never used.[3] It was admired on such occasions as in April, 1926, when the Garden Club of America came to visit Santa Barbara on a tour of outstanding gardens here, and they were given a barbecue in the canyon close by the green theatre.

The William T. Carringtons' Outdoor Theatre

The William T. Carringtons came to Montecito from New York in 1916 and bought their estate from Charles W. Gould. Their "Villa di Riposa" was copied from a famous villa on Lake Como. The garden featured roses of every variety as well as pines brought from all over the world. A six hundred-foot avenue of cypress led up to a white stuccoed Greek studio, where were presented concerts and art events. This was provided for the pleasure of Mr. Carrington, a music lover, who had been a director and founder of the Chicago Symphony as well as later a director and financer of the American Opera Company in New York.

Mrs. Carrington, the former Margaret Huston, sister of the actor, Walter Huston, had begun her career as a singer on the London concert stage. She



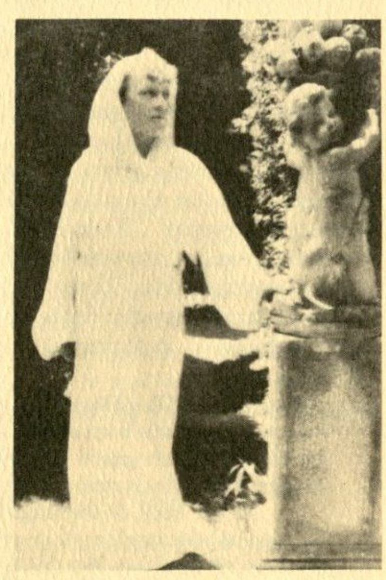
Edwin Gledhill's photograph of the Carringtons' theatre   Montecito History Association

was later notable in the theatre as a voice coach and stage director, having trained such stars as John Barrymore, Lilian Gish and Charles Laughton. She was a notable party-giver both in New York and Santa Barbara.

The Italian garden theatre surrounded by cypress hedges on the estate must have been built for Mrs. Carrington's gratification. Fortunately, there exists a photograph of the theatre taken by Edwin Gledhill. It reveals that there was a piece of statuary and a bench on either side of the stage. The terraced levels were outlined with small topiary bushes and garlands of greenery.

Reginald Faletti became acquainted with Mrs. Carrington when she directed him in a play at the Lobero Theatre in 1929. He writes:

> We became very good friends and I saw her quite frequently following the production and after she had married Robert Edmond Jones [in 1933], who was one of the foremost set designers in the New York theater during the 1930's and 1940's.
>
> Katherine (my wife) reminds me that Mrs. Carrington brought to our house, either in the late twenties or early thirties, the young Orson Welles, who was studying with her at that time. She also reminds me of the beautiful musical recitals which Mrs. Carrington presented for her friends in her theater in the late 1920's and early 1930's, which she also used for rehearsals. Every year she gave a garden party in her lovely garden during, as she put it, "The Bluebell Season."[4]



Mrs. Carrington with statuary in the garden
Montecito History Assn.

Mrs. William Miller Graham's "Country Play House"

Another Montecito Society leader interested in the dramatic arts was Mrs. William Miller Graham, who lived at "Bellosguardo," an estate with a large mansion and lovely gardens containing a tiny garden theatre along the ocean at Booth's Point. (The property is now the Clark estate.)

Sheldon Cheney described the special qualities of her outdoor theatre in his book:

> A garden theatre in which some of the natural beauties of the site have been preserved exists in the lovely playhouse of Mrs. William Miller Graham at Montecito, California. Here the old oaks and the more or less natural stage background would give the theatre a claim to be included in the "nature" group. But the conventional stage-wall and steps, the marble bench that so well centres the interest of the spectator, and the row of slender cypresses at the back, all are earmarks of the garden type. Behind the stage there is a little hedged-in "green room," and close by in the garden, are an *al fresco* Italian dining room and grill.[5]

It must have been used on many occasions. It was the location of an Italian fete with interpretative readings by Marion Craig Wentworth in July, 1914, to raise funds for Mrs. Graham's grand project of a Country Playhouse.

In 1913, she bought with friends an acre of land situated in a grove of trees on Middle Road near the Old Coast Highway for purposes of building an outdoor theatre for local use. She jointly owned the property with her son, Earl Graham; Edward Salisbury Field, a playwright; Isobel Strong, the daughter of Fanny (Mrs. Robert Louis) Stevenson and Clinton B. Hale. They also formed the board of trustees. The following year, Willis Polk of San Francisco, architectural chairman of the Exposition of 1915, designed the theatre and Francis W. Wilson supervised the building. (Wilson had also designed the Graham mansion and was one of Santa Barbara's leading architects in the very early 20th century.)

The purpose of the theatre was to put on original plays, due to the wealth of theatrical writing talent in Santa Barbara and Montecito. Salisbury Field created a play for the playhouse's opening. His two best-known comedies were of this period. "Twin Beds" was first produced in New York in 1914, the same year he married Isobel Strong. Isobel's son, Austin Strong, also was a playwright. His "Three Wise Fools" was produced in New York in 1918.

The Theatre opened in September, 1915. A few days before, the *Daily News and Independent* described it in great detail:

> The Country Play House. . .is wonderful in its construction architecturally, octagonal in shape with a tile roof, soft, warm grey walks of cement, huge collonades which guard the entrance doors, and original features in its construction which make it the only play house of its kind in America.
>
> . . . At the back of the stage is an immense sliding door through which an automobile may be place upon the stage or even the proverbial white elephant, if need be. But this is not the best part of the arrangement, for it has many possibilities. The sea and Rincon Point are plainly visible through it and may serve as a natural setting in many of the little plays which are to take place there.[6]

In April, the *Morning Press* had described the theatre in greater detail both inside and out:

> The interior of the Country Play House contains a level parquet where will be placed little tables at which there will be a seating capacity for 100

> persons. The entire theatre has accommodations for an audience of 250. The parquet is surrounded by a circular row of boxes in storeys. There are twelve boxes in the lower tier, thirteen in the upper. Back of the second tier of boxes is a circular arched loggia running entirely around the auditorium, beneath a vaulted ceiling. This loggia contains a double row of seats which are raised sufficiently to look completely over the upper tier of boxes.[7]

The theatre's grand opening in the fall of 1915 featured a tableau, a monologue, a romance and "The Stranger" by August Strindberg. The amateur actors represented the social register of Montecito, including Mrs. William Miller Graham in Strindberg and a satire. "Mrs. Minton was the first to have the benefit of the natural background which made a beautiful setting for her exquisitely executed fancy dances."[8]

There were plans for four amateur performances a year interspersed with other "artistic" uses such as music recitals, art exhibits and an annual flower show. In the middle of September, 1915, the Play House featured a Russian Bazaar selling articles made by peasant women and children. Various booths featured toys, laces and embroideries, textiles and jewelry. Russian music was played and the lady participants at the tea tables and booths wore appropriate costumes.

In December of that year a performance of "Snow White" was presented by local amateurs first as an evening performance and then on Christmas day as a free event for children only.

In March, 1918, the Country Play House held a dinner dance "Cafe Chantant" for the benefit of the local chapter of the Red Cross and the Recreation Tent Fund along the Belgian front. It was a successful fund-raising event completely sold out a week in advance. Unfortunately, an hour or so after the last guest had departed, the little theatre went up in flames.[9] The cause of the fire was never determined, but many were of the opinion that the heavy rains and electric wiring were contributing factors.

Mrs. Graham was in New York at the time and was notified of the disaster. It was thought that she would return and consider the rebuilding. She never did. (An important factor could have been that her daughter, Geraldine Miller Graham graduated from finishing school in 1919 and was introduced to society in New York and Santa Barbara the following year.)[10] The theatre property was sold in 1920.

The William H. Conklins' Outdoor Theatre

In 1919, the William H. Conklins came from Pasadena and bought about eight acres of land on Ortega Hill from the Ortega Ranch. Their estate in Montecito was known as "Casa Margherita" and it contained another outdoor theatre. They had been married in Italy in 1906 and spent several years abroad. He spent another period in Europe in 1915, when he was chairman of the American Relief in France. After the war he was involved with the state and national levels of the Y.M.C.A., as well as with the Boy Scouts nationally and locally in Santa Barbara.

A long gravel path led downhill from their house to the Conklins' outdoor theatre. It was terraced down to the raised stage with a pillar on either



The Conklins' outdoor theatre S.B. Historical Society

side and was surrounded by tall eucalyptus trees also serving as a backdrop. There was a sunken pit for the orchestra. The theatre held about 250 people.

There are programs for two occasions in 1933 when the Conklins entertained, using this stage at "Casa Margherita." The Santa Barbara State College Little Symphony played works by Beethoven and the combined choral groups of Santa Barbara College sang Rachmaninoff's "Creation Hymn." The Van der Voort Ensemble accompanied a ballet called "A Dream of Life."

In August they had a "Musical Pageant to assist musical students of Santa Barbara," put on by the students of Mebane Beasley and Mme Maria Kedrina. There were vocal excerpts from operas with an orchestral accompaniment by Antonio Van der Voort, a Santa Barbara violinist-arranger.

The program began with "Pagliacci." "The curtain rose on a colorful village scene with a donkey cart in the center and gaily costumed singers grouped around it, making a charming picture against the dull grays and greens of the trees."[11] Mr. Beasley sang the part of "Tonio" and Adriette Bowen as Pagliacci's wife "captured the hearts of many." Mme Kedrina's dancers from her local dance academy performed the "Fiesta of 1840" with a special Spanish orchestra and a Debussy piece with a piano accompaniment. In the latter, the children "gave a feeling of lyrical moonlight as they danced in white with tiny silver turbans looking light and airy against their sylvan background."

Several years later in November, 1940, the Conklins entertained the members of the choirs of the First Presbyterian Church with a musicale in their outdoor theatre and a supper party. Entertainment included "charades in costume, a tour of the gardens and outdoor theatre and dancing."[12]

In the 1950s, the amphitheatre suffered from disrepair and lack of use. Mr. Conklin died in 1952 and his wife a few years later.

Mme Ganna Walska's Outdoor Theatre

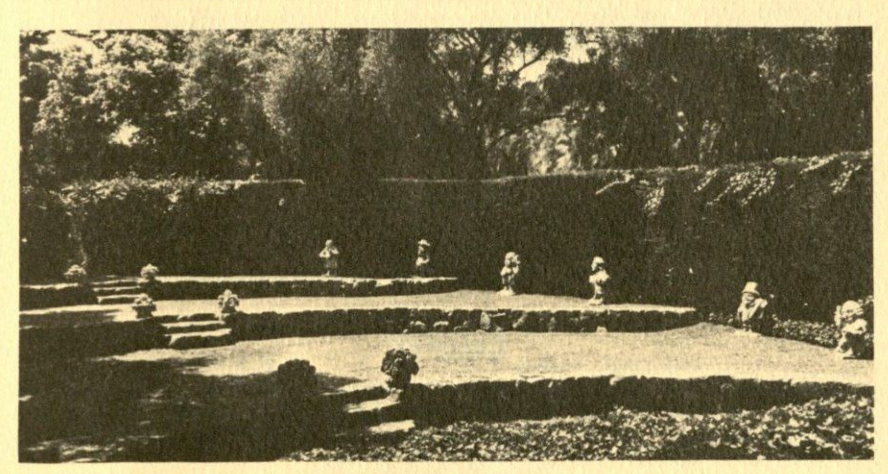
The latest outdoor theatre was designed by Ralph Stevens, the noted local landscape architect, for the Polish prima donna, Madame Ganna Walska in 1948. He planned a terraced green outdoor theatre seating 200 people, which was surrounded by walls of clipped cypress hedge. The tiers of seats were terraced and the lawn facing the stage was circular. This was decorated

with 17th century stone figures called "Grotesques," which Madame brought from her French chateau situated between Paris and Chartres.

On her Montecito estate, Madame Walska gave spectacular outdoor parties, often with elaborate decorations. On several occasions in the late 1940s, when she gave garden luncheons at Fiesta time, her guests toured the grounds, enjoying such special treats as the outdoor theatre with its cypress walls, as well as the famous lotus pool designed in the 1890s by the first owner, Kinton Stevens, Ralph Stevens' father. It was this pool that inspired the name "Lotusland" for her estate.

In a *Santa Barbara News-Press* article in December, 1951, Verne Linderman wrote about Madame Walska allowing the public to view her gardens through the Garden Tours of Pearl Chase's Plans and Planting Committee:

> Madame Walska is enthusiastic over her little Greek theater where she will give concerts. It has a feeling of antiquity and serenity—everything is either green or of stone.[13]



Mme Ganna Walska's outdoor theatre — Rafael Maldonado, S.B. News-Press

In spite of her hopes, there seems to have never been any musical productions there. But instead, in the summer of 1962, she gave a fashion show of Mr. John's creations in her little green theatre as a fund-raising event.[14] (Mr. John from New York was her favorite designer of hats and ensembles and she frequently wore his designs when she entertained!)

The cacti gardens and the theatre near the Hanging Garden of succulents continued to be admired on garden tours sponsored by Plans and Planting and Santa Barbara Beautiful in the 1960s and 70s. The most recent tour was given in July, 1982, but with encroaching age, Madame Walska could no longer personally guide the tour as she had done so grandly on so many previous occasions.

* * * * * * * *

What has happened to these private playhouses in Montecito? Mrs. Graham's "Country Play House" went up in smoke after only a few years

of use. The grounds of Piranhurst have suffered from the Coyote Fire and neglect. The theatre is in a state of ruin. The Carrington estate has been divided up and the amphitheatre no longer exists. Only vestiges are left of the Conklin outdoor theatre and the path leading to it is overgrown.

The cypress theatres at "El Mirador" and "Lotusland" fortunately remain. One hopes that they will be preserved as reminders of that unique period in Montecito when people of great wealth retired here and built fabulous estates with gardens and little theatres constructed more for aesthetic pleasure than for use, although three of them were used in very creative ways.

FOOTNOTES

1. Sheldon Cheney, *Open-Air Theatres,* New York, 1918, p.99.
2. *The Western Woman,* March 1931, p. 18.
3. Interview with Mrs. Elmer Awl who discussed this theatre with her husband.
4. Quoted from Reginald Faletti's letter dated April 19, 1983.
5. Sheldon Cheney, *op. cit.,* p. 107.
6. *Daily News and Independent,* August 30, 1915.
7. *The Morning Press,* April 19, 1914.
8. *Daily News and Independent,* September 3, 1915.
9. *Daily News and Independent,* March 8, 1918.
10. "Charles W. Dabney Jr. Engaged to Geraldine M. Graham," *New York Times,* June 14, 1925, p. 25.
11. *The Morning Press,* August 16, 1933.
12. *Santa Barbara News Press,* November 17, 1940.
13. Verne Linderman, "Mme Ganna Walska Delights in Creating Cactus Paradise on 36 Acre 'Tibetland,' " *Santa Barbara News Press,* December 23, 1951.
14. Information from Mrs. Hania Tallmadge, Mme Ganna Walska's niece.

CREDITS

In appreciation for the information and direction given to me by Mrs. Leo McMahon and Warwick S. Carpenter, Jr. of the Montecito History Association Committee.

In appreciation for Stella Haverland Rouse's articles on Mrs. William Miller Graham's Country Play House & the Bothins' Piranhurst estate in "Olden Days."

SOURCES

1. Mr. & Mrs. Henry E. Bothins' The Greek Theatre: Louise Shelton, *Beautiful Gardens in America,* New York, 1924.

2. The William T. Carringtons' Outdoor Theatre: photograph by Edwin Gledhill (courtesy of Keith Gledhill). Filed at Montecito History Association.

3. Garden Theatre on the Estate of Mrs. William Miller Graham: Sheldon Cheney, *The Open Air Theatre,* New York, 1918, p. 111.

*4. Mrs. Graham's Country Play House: *The Morning Press,* April 19, 1914 or drawing.

5. The William H. Conklins' Outdoor Theatre: snapshots & negatives are available at the S.B. Historical Society's Library in the Conklin file box.

6. Mme Ganna Walska's Outdoor Theatre: *Santa Barbara News Press,* July, 1982. Photo by Rafael Maldonado.

*The Historical Society is grateful to Mr. Robert Ingle Hoyt, A.I.A. for copying a photograph of the Country Play House which appeared in the Morning Press April 19, 1914, and his explanation of its architectural characteristics:

"An Italian Renaissance pavilion in the manner of Palladio, the principal architectural source for many architects, including Thomas Jefferson. The use of the Italian Cypress is consistent with the arches, arbitrary octagonal form and roofs of clay tile."

PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE GLEDHILL LIBRARY

Few members realize how many photographs the Gledhill Library has in its files and how valuable they are for historical research, or for just reminiscing. Some families have donated large collections of personal photographs. In addition, many people have given snapshots of typical Santa Barbara scenes. This is true of the file containing many pictures of roads, homes and scenery which Stewart Edward White took in the early 1900s. There are many other prints taken by amateur photographers which help writers, historians and current residents to visualize Santa Barbara as it was "then."

For this *Noticias* Miss Helen Caire has sent some fine "people" pictures to add to our already quite large collection of Santa Cruz Island scenery. When Mrs. Patricia Gardner Cleek did extensive reasearch on Montecito's outdoor theatres, she uncovered some hitherto unknown illustrations for her article.

Her story relates to the not-too-distant past, and should remind all of us that Santa Barbara has many interesting people, places and happenings that should be "visually recorded" for future reference. Everyone is part of history, especially of this beautiful city. Do you have a contribution, properly labeled?

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Aileen Foxen Allen*
Mr. Arthur Brown
Mrs. Caleb D. Elliott
Mr. Rowe Giesen
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